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Jersey Beat!

ISSUE NO. 43

SUMMER, 1991

TWO DOLLARS



BEWITCHED

Hoboken's New
SuperSonic Beat

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THE JUNK MONKEYS

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THE DEVIATORS

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- 6 That's The Way (I Like It).....TRENCHMOUTH
- 7 Brandy (You're A Fine Girl).....THE REIVERS
- 8 The Night Chicago Died.....NO EMPATHY
- 9 Shannon.....THE SINATRAS
- 10 Theme From Shaft.....CHEER-ACCIDENT

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JERSEY BEAT

418 GREGORY AVENUE
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Issue No. 43

Summer, 1991

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#40 - SOLD OUT

#41 with YO LA TENGO, Soulside, Crawlpappy, Nine Inch Nails, tons of photos and all the usual features.

#42 with WEEN, Lucy Brown, Loose, Anthropobia, a special report on the funk wave, coverage of New Music America, and the usual tons of cool stuff.

Here we are with another issue, and in case you're counting this marks our ninth anniversary. There are a couple of other zines around -- Jack Rabid's Big Takeover and Rick Sullivan's Gore Gazette -- that celebrated their TENTH anniversary last year, so it's not that big a deal. But I'm sort of proud of the fact that this thing has kept going for so long without compromising its commitment to the grassroots, do-it-yourself punk rock ethic that we started with. Back in 1982, when Jersey Beat #1 was published, nobody used the words "Alternative Rock;" we couldn't get anyone at a major label to take our phone calls, let along send us records to review. Now we're inundated with records (well, CD's and tapes, actually) AND phone calls from the major labels, most of which we try to ignore.

But look around at what's been happening the last year. Redd Kross, King Missile, Nirvana, Material Issue, Cavedogs, Junk Monkeys, Goo Goo Dolls, School of Fish, Feelies... Does that sound like a list of major label bands? Because it is, you know. I can't help wondering what'll happen in a year or so when none of those bands sells major label-type numbers. Will those cool bands just get dropped so a bunch of A&R guys at the major labels can sign another dozen "hot" indie acts and watch them fall short of the mark too? Time will tell.

One big problem we had with this issue was space. Too many records, not enough pages, and not enough advertising to print a larger issue. In case you're wondering, it costs around \$800 to print Jersey Beat these days, and that doesn't include all the incidental costs, like what I spend on film and processing, screening the pics, mailing, etc. We're still a long way from Reflex or Alternative Press in terms of the way we run things, but like it or not, this fanzine has become as much a business as a hobby, and as much work as it is fun. It is still fun, or we'd just stop doing it. But before you start kvetching about this or that, keep in mind the realities of making this albatross fly every three or four months, ok?

To dispel some confusion, we do still review cassettes, both demos and cassette releases. Our policy is that if an album is available in a variety of formats, we prefer anything else (vinyl, compact disc) over tapes, because it's a pain in the butt to try and write a review from cassettes. But if a cassette is all you have (or all you can afford to send), then we'll give it a shake. At the risk of repeating myself yet again, we also get a lot more stuff than we have room to review. That goes double for 7 inches... Singles may be dead as far as the big guys go, but an awful lot of bands and small labels are getting into them in a big way. We didn't have room this issue to review even half of the ones we received.

The folks who help put Jersey Beat together have been busy too. Bruce Gallanter just opened his own record store, Downtown Music Gallery, at E. 5th Street and Third Avenue in New York. If you're in the neighborhood, drop him and say hello. Contributor Tom Brebic is getting married this summer. Ben Weasel put his band Screeching Weasel back together and is touring out to California, and may be recording for Lookout. Johnny Puke is publishing his first book of poetry this fall. John Lisa's band, Sleeper, did a short tour with Stand Up, and his label, Tragic Life Records, is doing great. Chris Lauless, who does a lot of those wild little drawings you'll see littered around the zine, is enjoying his freedom in the Pittsburgh area after several years as a guest of the federal penal system.

And so we plod on toward our tenth year, doing the best we can, listening to lots of records (and CD's, and tapes), going out to see lots of bands, and every couple of months putting it all on paper. Funny, a couple of years ago, Kevin Seconds wrote a song called "Nine Years" about his experiences in 7 Seconds. The chorus, I remember, went, "Nine years, why did it take so long?"

Nine years? How did it go by so fast?

- Jim Testa
June, 1991

S U B U R B A N

BOHEMIA

PRODUCTIONS

FOLLOWING THE NOISE SCENE

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

JACK

About two years ago, at one of those legendary noise fests that I run on occasion, a Brooklyn based unit known as Yellow Tang blasted out their set of unique improv/noise. They also released one of the strangest videos I've ever encountered, before founding member Ron Anderson moved to the Bay area where he now leads the Molecules. Also since moving, Ron put out a Yellow Tang CD, which I'm certain he will send me one of these days...

The two remaining members of YT have since mutated into an equally promising noise/improv unit known as Jack. Jack is a dense, erupting trio, whose lineup includes Aigars Kildiss on sampling keyboards, Ray Sage on powerhouse drums (also a member of Reverb Mofos), and Ron's replacement, J.C. Morrison on assault guitar. Their sound is all their own, although they often remind me of Regressive Aid, perhaps the hottest progressive/punk/funk/jazz/rock trio of all time. No small feat. The main difference being that there is no bassist in Jack, and none is needed. Their three song demo is like capturing a hurricane on tape.

The opening salvo, "Thirds," is one huge rush of energy. Aigars provides a mesmerizing, repeating pattern whose sound source is much like the tone of their guitarist. Hence, both players sound as one. Jack do a unique job of building blocks of sound, one upon another. There is no soloing going on (unlike most jazz), just a monstrous structural force brewing, threatening but never actually going out of control.

Instead of a bass line. Aigars utilizes this mutant low end samples as the rhythmic center on "Dad." The almost funky yet fractured beat lumbers forward like an ogre on down. Guitarist J.C. sounds sort of like early McLaughlin or Fripp, playing frantic non-linear digit flexing. A fine example of combining opposites. "Slam" has a weird little sample on the intro and outro. Not unlike the sampling wiz in Cop Shoot Cop, Aigars samples some rather amelodic, dark, unkeyboard-like sounds. J.C. unleashes this howling feedback backdrop that signals Crimson-like pounding passages, which build to a moutainous climax. These cats mean business, there is no doubt. They'll be at CBGB on June 26, so get excited and let them blow you away.

DEADICATION - Tribute To The Grateful Dead (Arista)

There are those who have no use for these tribute projects. Not me. Although it would be unrealistic to expect complete consistency from a dozen or more different bands or solo artists, many of these tributes are more worthwhile than we often give credit. First there were the unusually strong and diverse tributes to Thelonius Monk, Walt Disney, Carl Stallings, and Ennio Morricone, most often produced by Hal Wilner. Next came the band tributes to Neil Young, Syd Barret, the Byrds, the Kinks, the Stones, and more recently, Jimi Hendrix and the Velvets. All but one of these were released by the British Communion label, licensed and released domestically by NJ's Skyclad Records.

There are many gems to be found throughout this series, especially on the Byrds and Hendrix ones. The good thing about this project is that it helps discover new bands as well as exposing listeners to some old treasures being redone.

DEADICATION is one of the first of these band tributes to come out on a major label, and they've done a mostly excellent job. The packaging is superb, on recycled paper, and much of the proceeds go to benefit the rain forests. And this 15 song, 75 minute CD has only two clinkers -- the fictitiously named Harshed Mellows, who are really Tom Petty's Heartbreakers fronted by Michelle Malone & Dan Baird (who do a useless, petrified version of "U.S. Blues") and Jane's Addiction's "Ripple."

Both Los Lobos and Bruce Hornsby do jubilant versions of "Bertha" and "Jack Straw." Also, we find down home covers of "Truckin'" by Dwight Yoakam, and "Casey Jones" by Warren Zevon and David Lindley. On the more subtle side, Elvis Costello croons a lovely "Ship Of Fools" with Jerry Garcia sparkling behind him (I believe). Lyle Lovett does a sweet job on "Friend Of The Devil," and I also like the Indigo Girls' purly acoustic adaptation of "Uncle John's Band."

One criticism is that most of these tunes sound exactly like the originals; only three tracks are truly different. It's quite odd to hear a reggae band changing "California" instead of "Jah Rastari," as on Burning Spear's version of one of my favorite Dead tunes, "Estimated Prophet." Dr John does a cool New Orleans job on "Deal" and surprisingly, Midnight Oil, that politically correct band from Down Under, do a strong, dark, ominous version of "Wharf Rat."

If I had programmed this comp, the two clinkers would have been eliminated and replaced by some more striking covers, like Phantom Tollbooth doing "Cream Puff War" or NJ's Living Earth doing the obscure "Mason's Children." (And let us not forget the Henry Kaiser Band, who do an entire Dead set, including rarely done versions of "Blues For Allah," "Dark Star," and "New Speedway Boogie".)

Overall, this is a very good tribute to an often misunderstood phenomenon, proving that the Grateful Dead have written some great and diverse material.



Randumb Thoughts

© John Hill '91

by Jim Testa

One of the most exciting new bands in Hoboken these days doesn't sound anything like what you think a "Hoboken" band sounds like. In fact, it's Bob Bert's band -- the Bob Bert who played drums for Sonic Youth and Pussy Galore -- and it doesn't sound like what you'd think Bob Bert's new band would sound like either. Who'd guess that the drummer of two of the most important alternative bands of the '80's would wind up fronting a combo that included not only a deejay scratching records, but a drum machine as the main source of percussion?

Truth is stranger than fiction, but not nearly as weird as Bewitched.

I figured the ideal place to interview the band would be at Maxwell's before their show in early May. Maxwell's is not only a club, it's a great restaurant, and bands get to eat for free. So naturally these guys turn down the free meal and take me to a backyard on Willow Street in Hoboken, for a surrealistic twilight barbecue. With punk rock and rap tapes blaring in the background, in between munching on ribs and chili and listening to Steve Malkmus of Pavement discuss modern art, we talked.

THE BAND:

Bob Bert - vocals, drums (usually on two songs per set)

Chris Ward - bass

Artie Reinitz - guitar (a vegetarian, he skipped the barbecue)

Dave P. - turntables, samples

Roland 626 - drum machine (stayed at the club too)



BOB BERT

BEWITCHED Bob & Chris & Dave & Artie & Roland



DAVID P.

Bewitched photos by Jim Testa

Q: The original concept of Bewitched started out as a practical joke that you and Susanne cooked up?

Bob: Thurston (Moore) and Susanne cooked it up, I didn't have any part of it. After I left the band, they had gone over to England on a tour and they started to tell the English press that me and Susanne had this band. I had kind of wanted to do something anyway, so then Paul Smith of Blast First offered to put it out. So I went into the recording studio and whipped up the first record. After I gave him the first tape, he wanted it remixed, so I called in Jim Foetus and Rollie from the Swans to help me out, and after that, Paul absolutely hated it. He wouldn't return my phone calls. So I put it out myself.

Q: And then there were a few more or less performance art pieces that you called Bewitched too, right?

Bob: One. Just that thing for Impulse magazine.

Q: So when did you get serious about putting this thing together?

Bob: Chris and Jim (Fu, original guitarist) were jamming with a drum machine, and I started going down and fucking around with them a little bit. So then Todd (Abramson, who books Maxwells) offered to let us open up for Spacemen 3, and that's when it got serious. We got it together. Donna from Tiny Lights was playing with us for a while, she did a bunch of shows with us. And we were using tapes and stuff anyway, and that's when Dave heard about us and wanted to help us out with his turntables.

Q: It's really ironic that the drummer from two of the most famous bands of the 80's would wind up singing in a band with a drum machine.



BEWITCHED



Bob: Yeah. I never thought that would happen. I used to hate them. It wasn't until rap, and Big Black, came along that I started to think they were pretty cool. Then I started playing around with one. The lineup happened because no one else wanted to sing. We had to get it together really fast to do that first show and it all just fell in place.

(Bob leaves to try the vegetarian chili)

Q: Okay (to Dave P.), now we're going to hear the Dave story. I remember seeing you at all the CBGB hardcore matinees years ago when you were this little kid in a hooded sweatshirt who came to all the shows to mosh. That was your introduction to the music scene, right?

Dave: (laughs) I guess so. The introduction to that music scene, anyway.

Q: And then you used to deejay at the Pipeline?

Dave: Yeah, the Pipeline in Newark. Emilio out there gave me a job. I just had a pretty decent record collection but I never deejayed or anything. His club wasn't really happening at the time and he let me come down and spin some records, and he liked it so he kept me there for like five years. And I was doing some booking there for a while, the hardcore matinees on the weekends.

Q: Had you ever tried scratching before Bewitched?

Dave: No, not at all. I was just deejaying at different clubs, just mixing, not scratching. I had just saved up enough to buy my second turntable, and it was at that point I was talking to Chris, and he asked me to come down and try it out.

Q: When you're "playing" the turntables, what exactly are you playing? Are those special records, or just ordinary albums that have parts that you use?

Dave: They're just pretty wacky records that have interesting sounds on them. All different stuff, actually.

Q: Do they have special scratching-deejay records with just drum beats on them?

Dave: Oh yeah, sure they do. I have a couple in there like that. They have all your popular sound bytes that you hear on your rap records and the drumbeats and stuff on them.

Bob: He has specific records for specific songs, though. It's not like he just picks up any record and starts scratching it while we're playing.

Dave: We use maybe two or three different records on one song sometimes.

Q: So you're keeping very specific track of what you're doing?

Dave: Yeah, hopefully it's always the same every time we play. All the parts are there.

Q: So it's almost like learning a part on the guitar.

Dave: Yeah. It's also like using the turntables as a sampler to sample different things we want in certain parts of the songs.

Q: The samples that you use, are those sounds that you've sampled yourself? Or things you've lifted from other records?

Dave: It's just constructions. We take drum sounds off records and then I have a sequencer that programs everything, that you can sequence all the stuff that you're doing.

Q: Bob, had you played with drum machines before you started doing it in Bewitched?

Bob: No. Just by coincidence, though, me and Chris owned the same drum machine.

Q: For all the techno buffs out there, what is it?

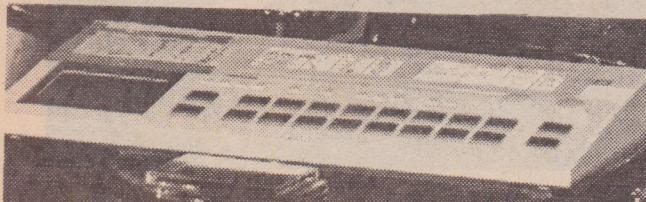
Bob: It's a fuckin' Roland 626.

Dave: It's obsolete.

Bob: Yeah, and we have nothing to do with Skinny Puppy or all these stupid bands that you always hook us up with. We don't listen to any of that stuff. I hate Wax Trax. I hate all that stuff. If anything, we're trying to combine hard rock with a rap/hip hop kind of thing, but it's just slightly on both ends. And I still play the drums a lot too. Not in this band, in another band.

Q: What's that?

Bob: The Action Swingers. We have an album coming out on Caroline.



Q: Is that a real band now? I know it used to be just Ned Hayden and whoever showed up to play with him.

Bob: Now, it's me, Ned, Julie (Caffritz of Pussy Galore) and Pete Shore of the Unsane. We have a three album deal with Caroline. It's a real band with real songs. It's gotten pretty tight.

Q: What's the status of your record deal with Bewitched? (With Terry Tolkien's No.6 Records)

Bob: It's a horrible situation right now. It's just part of the whole Rough Trade mess. Rough Trade owes Terry a bunch of money, and he's real pessimistic about it because there are people that Rough Trade owes a lot more to than him. So right now it's fucked, and it's weird that we're going out on tour without any kind of support. Like, I have to send all the clubs records, and I have to use the promos that I have. It's just no backup at all. And it's really kind of frustrating because we're ready to do another album, we have enough songs and we really wanted to do it after the tour. But we want to do it well and we want a good bit of money to go into the studio with...

Q: And Terry won't let you go sign with someone else?

Bob: Oh no, he can do that. We only signed to him for one record. He's an A&R guy at Elektra now, although he's not ready to sign us there yet. So we just need to find a really happening indie label, hopefully like Caroline or Touch & Go. We're just gonna do this tour and hope someone comes up to us with a contract.

Q: How many dates are you doing?

Bob: Like, twenty. We're starting out going to D.C., Philly, Richmond, then we're swinging up to Boston, heading out through Ohio, Madison, Milwaukee, all the midwest. Then we're scooping up to Canada for three shows, then we're coming down to Connecticut for two shows. It's about five shows a week.



DAVID P.

Q: When you go to Madison or Chicago or wherever, do you get a lot of "Sonic Youth's Bob Bert And His New Band appearing tonight..."

Bob: We've never gone to these places before. I gave the booking agent to use that, to just use anything he can to book shows. So it's bound to happen. I just hope there's people there. I sort of have the Fugazi attitude where I hope they'd just come to see the band, not expecting to hear Pussy Galore or something. But fuck it, man. We'd do anything to get people into the shows. But the album's been out for a while, so there should be some people who know who we are.

Q: Any idea how many records you've sold?

Bob: Well, the last time we got an accounting, which was four or five months ago, it was approaching 5,000. It got released in Germany, and they got rid of at least 1200. I think, for the first album, that was pretty good.

Q: It sounds really good to me. I mean, the typical Homestead first album sells about 2000.

Bob: That's what they tell everybody. That fucking place, if I must say so. That place should be burnt down. That guy who owns it should be hung by his ball. All I know is that I'm on records there that didn't cost much to make, that've been in the stores for six years, and I've gotten one accounting. Once. Years ago.

Q: Do you get royalties from SST?

Bob: I was getting these \$12 a week checks. But I'm only on "Sonic Death" and a couple of songs on "Confusion," but not much else. I was getting some money from Blast First but they're not paying much anymore. I live off Caroline pretty much.

Q: That's the Pussy Galore stuff.

Bob: Yeah. It's really amazing. You get four months accountings.

Q: Let me ask Chris a question.

Chris: Oh no.

Q: Is this like a Nine Inch Nails situation where Bob comes in and lays down what it's gonna be and you guys just do what he tells you?

Chris: Pretty much.

Dave: Yeah, it really sucks.



ARTIE REINITZ

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Chris: No, it's a total democracy. Generally when we write a song, we come up with a drum pattern. Then I come up with a bass pattern. Then Artie writes a guitar part and Bob writes the lyrics, and Dave just finds a way to fit in.

FLASHBACK TO SOUNDCHECK, earlier in the day...

Dave is adjusting the sound on his turntables.

Q: Dave, why bother, nobody ever hears you anyway.

Bob: People just think they don't hear him. He's so perfectly in tune with the rest of the instruments in the band that you don't think he's there, but he's actually complementing all the other sounds.

Q: Kind of like the cello in Tiny Lights.

Bob: That's been said before, actually.

BACK TO THE BARBECUE...

Q: You're kind of into that post modern thing where the guitar just makes a lot of noise and the bass carries the melody.

Chris: With Jim, we had to be that way. Artie can do just about anything with guitar.

Bob: Artie's really great. Jim was great in his own way too, but Artie is more structured. When you play a song with Artie, you know how it's going to sound. Whereas when you play with Jim, nothing ever came out the same way twice.

Q: Bob, did sitting there behind the drum kit while Thurston or Jon got all the attention all those years motivate you to become a lead singer?

Bob: Not at all. I never sat back there and said, gee, I wish I was in Jon Spencer's shoes. I love drumming. It kind of happened accidentally.

Chris: Somebody had to sing.

Bob: Somebody had to sing. We had a show. I sat down and wrote "Neon Angel" and that was it.

Q: You write the lyrics?

Bob: Yeah.

Chris: Bob puts the titles on the songs too.

Bob: Well, the title usually has something to do with the lyrics.

Q: Anything else you want to say?

Bob: At least you didn't ask me why I quit Sonic Youth.

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ACT UP

Like all sound musical conceptions, Industrial is action and it is thought: Action in which doctrine is imminent and doctrine arising when a given system of historical patterns are inserted and worked on from within this framework. Thus many of the practical expressions of "industry" can only be understood when considered in relation to its general attitude towards life. This being stated, let us begin with this issue an attempt at defining the sound in question. The "Guitars Or Else" type reader, who may have already stopped reading by this point, may think the Industrialist a "slave to technology." I think not. Electronics have constantly evolved and are still evolving, while the almighty guitar hasn't. And as for effects and/or applications, no one save Fripp, Belew and lesser others, such as Edge or Summers, have progressed much beyond the hazy daze of Hendrix. So who, comrades, is the "slave" to a medium? Synth is all. Guitar is a guitar is a guitar is a... It's certainly a revival, methinks. So much for that Manchester dance sound, to me it's just the 6T's Pop Revival -- AGAIN.

Insofar as it is embodied in the state of the Industrialist, KK, via Cargo, outranks its competition with quantity AND quality. Marz Records from Fla. scores big in quality (their contribution to Danse Assembly again noted for its greatness). Wax Trax, on the other, still wastes (quantity) valuable vinyl and promo on such worthless discs as Chris Connelly's "Wimplash Boy" lp or NIN's latest (disguised as the x-great 1000 Homie DJ's) cover single, "Stupid Naught." Oh, and their Sub-Pop "branching out" was such a success, you can find either Gods Acre or Wreck in the 99 cent bins already. Good one, guys! As Trent would say, "Another One Bites The Dust." Or what was that, "Get Down Mark Lard"???

DANSE ASSEMBLY



By MICK HALE

AAAK "Big Fist" lp KK/Cargo

YES! Giving Manchester dignity again. As Able As Kane make Manchester music the way it used to be -- Deep, dark, and moody; in a word, Good. Think: Joy Division, OMD, Fall, all updated via an Industrial bent. An excellent lp, this. "Train To The West" kicks the way "Lovely Day" did for fab sound. "Fast Cars" (at 157 bpm) is guaranteed to wake any danse floor! This band's going places. "Open Faith" is slow gloom that'd do Ian Curtis proud, while "Concrete" is yer standard "classic" Industrial instrorapmental, a few words & lotsa noise. All in all, a very great and varied LP. Do buy.

PSYCHICK WARRIORS OF GAIA "Exit 23" 12 inch KK/Cargo Is this the Psychic TV gang... YET! It's gotta be an outtake from their double lp "Jack The Tab," which unfortunately wasn't as consistent as this is good. An instrumental danse floor number, this. Complete with "French Kiss"-styled fem-breathing/panting and thos G.Moroder-esque K-boards. A must for DJ's, kinda unnecessary for others. A & B side both do the same thing, basically.

INSEKT "stress" CD KK/Cargo

Time to play: "Perfect Crime," the 1st track up, marks mid-tempo time somewhere between Ebb and Puppy, yet sounds original & refreshing thanks to its Belgian NewBeat qualities. It's nice to hear an honest-to-goodness vocal track for a change. I was beginning to think this "KK/Cargo" sound was voiceless. And about Insekts voice: A shredded voice battles a fuzz box and the effect wins, film at 11. It's a cool sound, but definitely not crossover material... the exception being the title track, where the voice shreds the shredder with welcomed success -- "My life is a mess/too much pressure/I'm under stress." "The Bat" monopolizes samples from that memorable staircase scene in "The Shining," while "Control Your Fear" is probably the most "dance floor" of all cuts. A fine CD, indeed.

CONSOLIDATED "Brutal Equation" Nettwerk/IRS 12-inch

OH NO. He did it. He really did it this time. Adam Sherbourn (x-BRILLIANT leader of Until December, SF's Goth-danse queens of yesteryear) who still retained his dignity with Consolidated's last two discs: Industro-Rap with brains, even -- finally BLEW IT! This 12 inch just sucks! And worse even, HOW (after the horror show called Vanilla Ice) could ANYBODY use the word "Posse" with a straight face again?? Ahh, Fuck! I had high hopes for this, but even the MeatBeat production doesn't save it. Like the rap say: "You need to know why this project failed/why the forces of weakness prevailed.../while me and my posse sit and ponder our health/which is failing just like our career..." What a load of Shit this is. Maybe I'm just "too old and Caucasian" like Adam the singer. A MUST to avoid.

WORKFORCE "One Eye On The World/One On The Clock" CD

This Boston duo combines drum-machine driven danse-pop grooves with samples and fx to a sorta "Quirky Industrial" end. It's unique sound and Workforce are only the 2nd band I've heard to own this hybrid (The Weathermen being the first). I'm thinking Devo on LSD> The CD starts off kinda slow but picks up by track 3, and like the title states, "Everything Will Change," then cranks right into "Impressed," both of which feature dense, syncopated rhythms. "Stations of The Cross" recalls OMD or early Depeche Mode, with a sickly sarcastic sample to boot -- "Praise God, A thousand dollars -- Isn't the Lord good?" "38 Witnesses" melodically tells a horrid tale of rape and subsequent death, could be the soundtrack to A Current Affair... And "Wig World" IS the audio equivalent to John Waters. Great: with that James Brown "Woo-Haa!" sample even. An excellent danse floor track.

MANUFACTURE "The Voice Of World Control" CD Nettwerk

It's hard to believe that this is only Manufacture's 2nd full-length lp. It seems ever since there's been this thing called "Industrial," there's been this thing called Manufacture. Brian Bothwell and Perry Geyer started off in Boston in the "mid-1980's forging the soundtrack for the imposing end of the 20th Century." The CD is very good, from the light Industrial sounds of "A Measured Response" to the heavier "Many Machines," back to a D.Mode-like "New Decisions" to a Politically-sample-driven NewBeatish "The Bogey." "Control Yourself" is almost New Order-like. This lp was co-produced by Gregg Hawkins (x-Cars) and I must say it kicks all over Ric Ocasek's foray into Industrial production (via last year's 4-track sounding Suicide lp on Wax Trax). Congrats to IRS for picking up another Nettwerk classic in this.



FRONT 242

Photo by Michel e Taylor

ANOTHER NATION "Move Out" Marz

And speaking of Manufacture, Another Nation's debut single kicks out three mixes from Perry Geyer of... It's disappointing tho, as I'd like to hear sum other 'Nation material, being "Move Out" just RULES with great vocal growls, samples, and programming. It's everything Industrial/Elektronic/Danse musazk should be and more! The "Mixx For Your Body" starts off with a George Bush "Kinder, gentler nation" sample preserved here for all its absurdity, considering the methods he enacted (read: bombs) in order that we "liberate" (read: economics) Kuwait (read: Oil). But getting back to the topic at hand, I predict and hope that we'll be hearing ALOT more from Florida's own Another Nation. 'Cause we could all use a new group to look toward for new produkt in the "classick" sense of Industrial musik, what with most of our forefathers heading out to the thrash metal pasture. (2602 NW 5th Ave, Miami FL 33127)

DIVERSITY "Love Gone Wild" CD (EP) Coil

Pop gone astray, locals Diversity deliver with a mix of pop songwriting with electronic backings and danse-friendly production. An impressive debut, this "Love Gone Wild." The title track tells the tale of obsessive unrequited infatuation, which leads to a "restraining order." Groovy synthbass and sampled disco wah-wah guitar abound -- just below the Twitch-like vocals, the best danse-floor track on the disc. "Openly Sexual" starts off really strong and driving, but then the mock-HardCore shuffle, which could cripple a danse floor, makes for an interesting surprise. "Destiny" is a Sixties-ish pop tune funneled thru a sequencer, updated with lighter vocals and melody packed. It's the 2nd best cut. The duo, Rich Hornor and Jim McNichols, are working on new material. While they're basically a "studio" project, they are looking for a few "live" bandmates to play out with. Meanwhile, Get this disc! (PO Box 1315, New Brunswick NJ 08903)

PHILADELPHIA FIVE "Trilogy" 12 KK/Cargo

The only track that stands out is "Baby Do You Want To Bump," and that's for its humor - which says something about this album & band for that matter. "I Am Shared" operates under the theory that sex sells anything, with samples about orgasms, heavy panting, and little substance. "Woebegone Womanhater" is kinda danseable and boring.

SWAINS "Don't Call Us" 12 inch KK/Cargo

Ok. Ahh, it's just bearable Manchester-styled 6t's dance-pop and it's a 7t's cover no less. Rap-ish vocals with 6t's "Ah Ah" backups and a lotta guitar, it's the one or two samples that save it at all. The remix B side "Groovy Call" really blows big time -- So, basically, only one side of this rates at all. Unnecessary, really. Yea, Booyyy!

MIGHTY FORCE "Dive" Cassingle Relativity/Earache

Excellent techno-Euro-danse Industremetal with Public Enemy samples from "Channel Zero," this could win over the masses with its drive along, it's aggressive and clean -- a very upfront sorta production. These two cuts are great in all respects, altho a vocal track would be nice. B Side, "Dead Horse," is a bit heavier, even with guitars/screams and breathing samples all over it. Highly recommended, especially for the dj. Or anyone who just looks like one.

FRONT 242 "Rhythm Of Time" Epic

This new 12-inch from the ever Kraftwerkian Front 242 is at least better than their major label debut, "Tragedy For You." Three different mixes included, all quite dissimilar. My fave is the "Anti-G Mixx," it's the least repetitive and most NewBeatish of all three. the 12" mixx (only one with words) is strange the way the chorus just, like, happens to fall into place, as if: "Oh, there should be a chorus here." I think these guys really put themselves in a hard place by putting out SUCH a danse "Classick" as "Headhunter," really can they EVER top that? Will they?

THE KLF "The White Room" KLF/UK import lp

This is just a warning: If you were taken in (as was I) by the single "What Time Is Love," beware: This lp is nothing like that. It's close to awful, but I like some of it. "Make It Rain" is like that Dee-Lite female house vocal stuff. "3 AM Eternal," the domestic followup to "What Time...," is similar to that 1st single but with a different rapper it just doesn't have the edge. Most of the rest of the lp is just mellow "jazzy" crap. It's definitely not worth the \$14.95 you'd have to pay for it as an import.

GREATER THAN ONE "Index" CD EP WaxTrax

This neatly packaged yellow & black item starts off with the housey "Joy," which surprisingly always gets the floor moving. It's a laid-back groove which recalls Meat Beat Manifesto's instrumental stuff. It even has the same "(click)..Roger, copy..." sample as "Helter Skelter." It's good stuff, but not as strong as some other GTO output. "Metal" sounds a bit like mock-Laibach ta me. Then "Voice" is back to that Meat Beat-Meets-House sound, again ok but kinda generic. "Dub Killer" is just that: a dud remix of "Metal," but also with danse floor-unfriendly 8-second breaks -- a neat sample, but the beat just cuts out for too long and leaves people hanging. "Harmony," the CD-only bonus track, is like Noise Unit's soundtrack muzak -- slow, haunting and boring.

SUBBOTNICKS "The World At Its End" cassette

BurningBuddhist Technologies

Woah! This stuff makes Einsterzende Neubauten sound like the Archies! Well, it's Skinny Puppy-like without the electronics and/or techno end. Mostly distorted samples that echo on & on & on. A cover of Ministry's "Stigmata" (ha!) that sounds almost nothing like it, basically it's the end of the live version, you know: "Fuck me, fuck you, fuck Tipper Gore, fuck...fuck...fuck!" Oh and yes, there are a few actual songs on here too, which go off in more of a Goth/Bauhaus direction. "Pain Away" reminds me of a band (I once played guitar for)

called Love You Dead, who had a serious Bauhaus/Joy Division fixation, who luckily had an early Lorries edge come outta alla that. A very cool tape, this. (1502 Rustic Dr, Asbury Park NJ 07712)

PIGFACE: The Album lp Invisible

I hate to do this, being I've heard what a totally nice guy Martin Atkins (xPIL, Killing Joke, Ministry) is. So maybe I'll just give a "no comment" to this and let some experts tear it to shreds:

"Everyone that bought that record has tried to return it"

- Judy, MUSIC IN A DIFFERENT KITCHEN

"Yeah, I can't believe how awful that record is, like there's one 'song' that's just some guy rubbing his finger on a mirror, and that's like the whole song!"

- Anonymous Customer at Music In A Different Kitchen

"They are pretty fuckin' lousy"

- Werner, CROCODILE SHOP

"There's no reason for that record to exist"

Clerk, PRINCETON RECORD EXCHANGE

So there you have. And that slams the lid on another issue.

That's all fer dis issue, kids. Don't forget (tell your friends). If you'd like to correspond and have or know of any industrial produkt we should be reviewing, send stuff to: 100 Montgomery St #1Q, Highland Park NJ 08904 USA. Or just bring it by The Roxy any Thursday night (10 - 2 AM) when I present this column in audio form at dj. The Roxy is at 95 French St (Rte 27), New Brunswick. C-ya!



PIGFACE

Photo by Miche le Taylor

LOST

"STUMBLE
NEWELLPIE

HEADHUNTER

SAN DIEGO
RECORDS

RICK FARK

ROCKET CRYPT

FROM THE

PAINT AS A FRAGRANCE
HEADHUNTER

RECORDS: SAN DIEGO - CALIFORNIA

RICK FARK

by Tom Brebic

Springhouse is an alternative pop type band from New York City who have been around since 1988. The group consists of Jack Rabid (drums, lyrics), Mitch Friedland (guitar, vocals) and Larry Heinemann (bass). Last year, Springhouse released a single on Steve Fallon's Singles Only Label and the band recently released their debut album, *Landfalls*, on Caroline Records.

While the dynamic of the band is very much a trio, it's drummer Jack Rabid who's the most recognizable name, with one of the most impressive resume's in punk rock: Member of the early 80's NY hardcore band Even Worse (which included at various times Thurston Moore and Tim Sommer); editor of *The Big Takeover*, for over ten years one of the best-written and most heartfelt fanzines in America; columnist for several publications including *Rockpool*; deejay at clubs like Irving Plaza and The Ritz.

I chatted with Jack at the 91 At 9th Avenue Diner.

spring house



Photo by Michele Taylor

Q: Tell me about some of your first experiences with alternative music.

Jack: I first started coming of age and going to clubs in '77. When I was in high school. I was trying to get people to listen to the Talking Heads and Bowie. I once wore a Talking Heads t shirt and I remember everyone saying what a stupid name for a band that was. Five years later and everyone was trying to buy the album.

Q: What do you think of the current Classic Rock radio format?

Jack: It's like there are those who either grew up with it or are just discovering it now. I'm sort of stuck in the middle.

Q: Do you see Springhouse's music as a progression... I mean, compared to your old band, Even Worse?

Jack: Even Worse was a punk rock band and we couldn't play anything else at the time. Something that's dear to my heart is that there's still some Even Worse graffiti in my home town that no one from the band had anything to do with. Even Worse had a sense of humor. I didn't think we were that bad... then hardcore came along and we didn't sound that way and lost our popularity. From '77 to '80, the average punk band was like in their mid-twenties, but then the scene ended up being like 16 year olds. I don't agree with this hardcore attitude of "the kids must have their say." Why? If anything, people over 25 would have more to say.

Q: And what does your band have to say?

Jack: The overwhelming impetus for forming a band is distaste for what else is playing. The UK/US alternative scene has gotten worse over the years and there is not much music that excites me. The classic response is to form your own band and play music that you want to hear. As far as having something to say... that's maybe a little too much. You write lyrics and hopefully they mean something to someone. Actually, if you're in a band because you want to have a good time, you're a jerk. There's no God given right to make records and get gigs. If you don't appreciate that privilege and use it to make meaningful music, why bother?

Q: Springhouse's presskit says that you shunned the current low tech/low fidelity trend of some bands in favor of 24 track. Why?

Jack: Low tech fits some bands... I mean, the Bad Brains did it with four track, but for us, it'd be stupid. We're trying to differentiate ourselves from the grungy-sounding feedback-oriented alternative bands. It's not that those type of bands are bad. It's bands that try to imitate other bands that stink.

Q: Larry Heinemann (bass) does something rather weird with a performance art ensemble. What's that about?

Jack: He's in the Blue Room Group. It's three guys who paint their faces blue. He does music for them and he's definitely the "musician" in Springhouse. He's also in Ravi Shankar's band, the Indian impresario.

Q: How were sales of your single, "Menagerie Keeper?"

Jack: Three pressings on the SOL label, their #1 seller. I think singles are great; even if you don't like it, it's only 3 minutes long.

Q: So what you're saying is that even if people think you guys suck, they only have to listen to it for three minutes.

Jack: Um, yeah, that's exactly what I mean. Ha ha.



Photo by Jim Testa

Q: I notice that those songs weren't on the album. Why?

Jack: Value for the money. Why should someone waste three bucks for a single and then we put it on the album? It's our way of saying thank you to those who bought the single.

Q: What type of crowd are you attracting at your shows?

Jack: Mostly people in their twenties. We've got some great opening slots with bands like Kitchens of Distinction, Ride, and House Of Love.

Q: Do you think those good bookings have anything to do with your connections in the music business?

Jack: No. Your connections might get you one good show, but if you don't bring in a crowd or they don't like you, that's it. I think one of the things that helps us is that we're accommodating and friendly... we plan on a tour in September. If it goes well, we'll quit our jobs.

If you're in a
band because
you want to have
a good time,
you're a jerk

- Jack Rabid



Q: Did Caroline leave you alone as far as telling you what to do with your music?

Jack: Yes, but they don't just ignore us and say do as you please. We submitted a sequence that they had some reservations about and they didn't say you can't use this sequence, they said we might be selling ourselves short by doing it. We, in the end, changed that sequence. Caroline is going to help us finance our video also. We're up against it and we know it. If you're going to swim against the tide, you're going to have to do a lot more work, and we're willing to do that. A number of majors passed on us, but it worked out better for us. Our music is better recorded than most indie product and we thought that was going to work against us getting signed to an indie; you know, not being rough edged enough. The first thing you do is make music and record; as far as getting a product out, that's different. Then you have to talk about markets. Independent Projects dug our music the most but didn't have the money, but Caroline became interested in us via a compilation with I.P. If there's no buzz on you, you're judged completely on whatever strengths or weaknesses you have.

Q: What is Springhouse's main strength?

Jack: Songwriting. I write most of the lyrics, Mitch does about half of them, and I play the drums. Mitch writes them and Larry arranges them.

Q: Management isn't via Caroline?

Jack: No, that makes no sense. You never want to be managed by your own label because you need someone to challenge the label and someone who the label can come to who isn't in the band. It's better to have your manager stand up for you.

Q: Since you've spent the last decade or so following the alternative scene, what observations do you have about it these days and what effect do you think it's had on your band?

Jack: I think people are lazy and settling for a lot less. When it comes to songwriting, they settle for the first catchy riff. The English still have a demand for songwriting and they won't just accept any band. A lot of what is going on today is overproduced pop recorded by machines.. You just fill in the Milli Vanilli vocals and that's that. On the other hand, you have hard rock where everything gets homogenized or you have the alternative scene that keeps everything grungy. Springhouse tries to use the technology. Technology isn't bad in itself, it's using the technology for glossified, decaying ends, the lowest common denominator that is. I count on enough people to say that the stuff on pop charts stink to form their own group that'll be good. When I joined Even Worse in 1980, it was a dream of mine to someday make an album, and it took me eleven years and you can't imagine what it feels like. I wanted to put out something I'm really proud of, and I am.

The Dendrite

Why The Dendrite Will Never Be Famous

by Bill Lutz

Anyone who knows me will undoubtedly look at the title of this piece and wonder why I haven't utilized this perfect opportunity to write a fawning, butt-licking rave about the only band on Earth that still invites me to parties. But I have decided to risk being ostracized by this last fringe group of humanity in a truly heroic attempt to force them to re-evaluate their own dreadful mismanagement. Yes, they are that irresponsible, and yes, I am that self-sacrificing. Or maybe they're just worth it.

First off, a bunch of reasons why the Dendrite should be famous, or should at least get some respect, or something nice:

- *The current lineup (Dave McClintock, vocals, guitar; Dante DeSole, guitar; Conrad Cooper, bass; Brian Schmidt, drums) has been together for over a year, and they do get better at almost every show. They also seem to have some of that genuine chemistry stuff.*

- *They have a small but pathologically dedicated group of followers who rarely ever miss a show. I myself have seen them over a dozen times and probably every show but maybe at least one was real good. My friend Rich saw them one time last summer and said it was "literally one of the best live rock shows I have ever seen."*

- *They write really swell songs, "hopelessly melodic, despite our urge to run naked into atonality," according to McClintock.*

- *(And this deserves a separate entry) "D Is For Dendrite" is probably the best band theme/anthem type thing since "Descendants" or maybe even "Black Sabbath."*

But back to the negative stuff. I have been seeing the Dendrite regularly since 1989, and have said more than once that maybe they should make some tapes to give away or sell at shows and so forth, and to this day I do not have a note of Dendrite music recorded (except from one compilation they're on, "Ear To The Street" on MBT Records, but good luck finding a copy). In fact, I have been on Mr. DeSole's case to get a tape or something to Mr. Testa so he could hear what I've been blowing his ink on. Six weeks! I've been asking him at least six weeks, and as of this writing, I still don't have a tape. It's not like they haven't recorded plenty of stuff, but he just couldn't make a tape. Buffoonery!!



And okay, I'm sure it's really frustrating to get screwed by CBGB more times than you've played in front of people, but I think they're pushing the patience of the Loyal Legion of the Dendrite by booking all-too-frequent shows at hellholes like (yuck!) the Sun Mountain Cafe. Also, some of the better gigs they've gotten recently have been at places like Continental Divide and Space At Chase, places it never even occurred to them until recently to try booking.

Anyway, I hope they're not overly insulted by this. (They won't know what this article is about until the issue is out) but it's really frustrating to hear a good band saying things along the lines of "Gee, we're not getting a lot of good shows, maybe we should change our style of music" and other such examples of not being able to see the forest for the hand in front of your face. Sigh.

You can write to the Dendrite (but not for tapes) c/o Dane DeSole, 216 E. 5th St, New York NY 10003.

by Alex Swain

GWAR and Kiss are probably the two ugliest bands I've ever seen on stage, but when they're not performing, they look like your average human beings. Will you imagine, please, a band that looks just as ugly on stage as they do off stage? Well, I not only imagined it, I confronted it. And let me tell you, they're pretty cool... BUT UGLY.

As the cold weather prevailed over the lovely town of Princeton, NJ, two members of...BUT UGLY agreed to meet me at the quaint establishment called PJ's Pancake House. After grabbing a table and ordering coffee, strawberry milkshakes, and extra water, the interview commenced:

...BUT UGLY are Packy Vomit, guitar and vocals; Art Zawodny, bass and shock therapy; and Frank Moschella, drums. Interview done with Packy and Art.

**...but
ugly**



Packy: Do you know you're Alex's tape recorder? Do your parents know you're Alex's tape recorder?

(Packy seems fascinated with my recorder)

Alex: Where's Frank?

Packy: Frank's at school.

Alex: Why is he at school?

Packy: To learn lots.

Alex: Packy do you go to school?

Packy: Nope.

Alex: Why not?

Packy: Um, I went to school for a long, long time. Kindergarten, high school, first grade... Actually, I went to pre-school once, my parents signed me up, and these two teachers tried to hold me down and keep me there, but I bit one of them, kicked the other one, and I ran away. So I never stayed in pre-school for more than a little while. And then the first day of kindergarten was the same, but then they taught me about coloring and coloring books, so I stayed. And then I stayed a long time, and then I decided I didn't want to go to school anymore.

Alex: So what do you do now during your day?

Packy: Um, is there a day?

Art: No, for Packy, it's just night. Just different sleep stages.

Packy: In between masturbating and feeding my cat, I don't do a whole lot of much, really. I play my acoustic guitar. Acoustic Ramones songs.

Alex: So how old are you now, Packy?

Packy: I'm 20 years old, and Art is 24. And Frank is 19. That's why he's still at school, because he's older and wiser.

Alex: So you don't really need the education then?

Packy: Well, I didn't say that, really.

Alex: So what does ...But Ugly do for fun?

Packy: Collectively or individually?

Alex: Both.

Packy: What do you do for fun, Art?

Art: Well, I collect CD's and watch cartoons.

Packy: Yeah, we watch The Simpsons and we're proud of it. We all like The Simpsons.... So what do I do for fun? I split protons.

Alex: Yeah, well, everybody does that. And neutrons too, right?

Packy: No way, man, stay away from those neutrons. (laughter) They'll kill you. Uh, I rape hedgehogs. I raise them from scratch in my garage with powertools, and when they're of legal age, I break them in.

Alex: The basic rape, pillage, and sodomy thing?

Packy: I've never pillaged a hedgehog, all right?



Alex: So what about the deceased Black Vomit (Art and Packy with a different drummer)?

Packy: Black Vomit is better left deceased.

Alex: But there's a big difference between the two. Black Vomit was this blistering hardcore, and But Ugly is, well...what is But Ugly?

Packy: Well, we got too old to play so fast, so we learned how to play our instruments, and now it's more toned down. Now we're a cross between Neil Young and the Ramones. BUT UGLIER!

Alex: And what about the old drummer for Black Vomit? What's with him?

Art: Well, he wasn't a good drummer but he was a good sticker man. He put up stickers really well.

Packy: Mike never liked playing drums too much.

Art: Yeah, he was a good jazz drummer though. With his friend Pete with the sixteen effect pedals that rendered music useless.

Alex: So what about this demo you just released, "Out Of The Basement And Into The Bedroom"? You do a Ramones cover?

Packy: An acoustic cover (of "Bonzo Goes To Bittburg")

Art: The name came from when we used to practice in the basement of Packy's house, and now we practice in the bedroom of Frank's house. And this weekend we're going back down to Frank's basement because his mom doesn't like us playing in his room.

Packy: Very esoteric, huh? Whatever that means. Very cerebral.

Art: Very surreal, you mean.

Alex: Very surrealistic.

Art: It's kind of like a re-birthing process for us right now.

Alex: So you're called But Ugly, but with one "t"

Packy: Wait, you were asking about "Bonzo," right?

Alex: Yeah, way back.

Packy: Yeah, an acoustic version of "Bonzo Goes To Bittburg," and an electric version of Neil Young's "After The Goldrush." Kind of balances out. We love Johnny Mathis too.

Alex: So the Ramones are pretty much a main influence?

Packy: Yeah, we pretty much agree on what we like. We all like the Ramones, Neil Young, A.O.D.

Alex: Oh, with Sam Shiffman?

Packy: No, that's P.E.D.

Alex: Oh yeah, well, A.O.D., P.E.D., S.O.D.M.D., what's the difference?

Packy: Yeah, really. We all like the Bad Brains. Definitely one of the best bands in the world.

Alex: What about the "Sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll" theory. Do you condone it?

Packy: Well, you've already heard about the hedgehogs.

Alex: So that's the sex portion of it.

Art: I don't condemn or condone the use of any small hairy animals for my purposes.

Alex: What about straight edgers and drinking and so on?

Packy: I think straight edgers are pretty silly but I don't condone drinking or sitting around doing drugs either.

Alex: Do you mind if others do it? To each his own?

Packy: Sure, as long as they don't puke on me or anything.

Alex: So drugs are a personal decision. What about sex?

Packy: I like sex.

Art: I like sex.

Packy: No more than three or four times a day though. Or masturbating.

Art: Masturbating rules.

Packy: Masturbating is sexual. You don't do one without the other and not miss it.

Art: But no one misses masturbating. It's my pastime.

Packy: We do condone sex, though.

Alex: Who do you have sex with?

Packy: My wife. Well, she isn't actually my wife.

Alex: So you're not married?

Packy: No.

Art: I'm actually married though.

Packy: Yeah, Art's married. He has a ring and everything.

Packy: My last wife left me for Johnny Ramone, but DON'T PRINT THAT. It didn't really happen though...

Alex: So how long as But Ugly existed?

Packy: Me and Art have been playing a long time, but we started playing again at the beginning of last summer. Then we found Frank sometime in September.

Alex: How did you find Frank?

...but ugly

Packy: We found him in a Foodtown.

Art: No, an A&P.

Packy: We've been grooming Frank to be our drummer for a long time, like I went to high school with him. Monroe Township High School. He knew that I was in a band and he thought it was really cool. Then he made me listen to Metallica because it's really cool. I'd tell him that if he wanted to listen to rockin' music, to listen to A.O.D. or Bad Brains, and he would go out and buy anything I told him to, and he still does. And now he likes everything we like.

Alex: What about the Mideast crisis, even though it's just about over. What about the oil fires in Kuwait?

Art: It's not a good thing to do.

Packy: Me and Art are not afraid to say we're very much against the war. And it's just so stupid. It's just over money and oil.

Art: It's just a battle over power, and it sucks.

Alex: If you guys could be anyone, who would you be?

Packy: I'd like to be Neil Young, 'cause he's really cool and all.

Alex: Do you think he's cute?

Packy: He's sexy.

Alex: He's way sexy. Very sexy.

Packy: I want to be rich and successful.

Art: I want to be Dee Dee Ramone and say "1-2-3-4" in German all day long.

Packy: I wouldn't mind being Greg Brady, but I prefer Cindy.

Alex: What about working? Do you guys work?

Art: I work.

Packy: I am not currently employed.



We're a cross

between Neil

Young and

the Ramones...

Alex: Do you do ANYTHING productive with your day?

Packy: Um, let me think... I make desks. I built a desk. I built a big lamp holder.

Art: You built this city on rock and roll.

Packy: Yup. Once or twice.

Alex: Do you guys have groupies? Like, "Butuglyheads?"

Packy: Yeah, just our wives and girlfriends, and our hired "women friends."

Alex: Who manages But Ugly? Who's taking care of you?

Packy: I am. That's why we're so screwed up. Actually, we have Jay and Dave, they're the Butuglyheads.

Alex: What do they do?

Packy: They follow us around and do what we tell them.

Alex: Do you pay them?

Packy: No, they pay us money. And sometimes we give them a hedgehog or two.

Alex: Are you getting paid for shows?

Packy: I think at the Fastlane we got 16 or 17 dollars. And we left before they had the chance to pay us at Red Spot. That's about it.

Alex: What record label is But Ugly on? (intense laughter for a few minutes)

Art: Alex, we're on Dumbhead Records.

Alex: How long has it been around?

Packy: I started Dumbhead Records so when we put out the Black Vomit 7", we could make it look more professional (more intense laughter) Got my dad to make up a logo, etc.

Alex: Are you planning on releasing any spoken word material?

Packy: Not for a while.

Alex: To close things up, what do you want from the public?

Packy: Hate mail, obscene calls, death threats... To buy our tape for three bucks.

Alex: Where can they get the tape?

Packy: You know.

Alex: Let's assume I don't know.

Packy: Well, then, send three bucks to Packy at 6 Florence Drive, Jamesburg, NJ 08831.

Alex: One last time, where's the old drummer for Black Vomit, Mike Otron? And how come he isn't playing drums for But Ugly?

Packy: I don't know. He went out to drink beer, stick stickers, and become an Olympic cyclist in Florida. Duh.

People always say it doesn't matter what you look like on the outside, it's what's in the inside that counts. Bullshit.

THE DEVIATORS

by Tom Angelli

The Deviators include ex-members of Dog Tired, Zombie Squad, and maybe even some other bands, but these guys are different musically. Mix in an influence of early Social Distortion with Stiff Little Fingers and some rock 'n roll and you might have an idea of what they're like. At the time we did this interview, they were calling themselves Nobody's Heroes, and played an ABC No Rio matinee under that name. But because another band had claim to that name, they've changed into The Deviators. The band is Tom, guitar/vocals; Pablo, guitar; Chris, drums; and Al, bass.

This interview was done after a "Hungerthon" show at Fairleigh Dickinson, where the guest speakers left because there wasn't anybody there. But the band was still in good spirits and here's what they had to say.



-- What lead you to your current musical direction?

Pablo: The new trend, you know, the Radicts are doing it. Let's jump on the bandwagon.

Tom: Yeah, we hopped right onto the bandwagon and ran with it. No.

P: Seriously?

T: But seriously?

A: We like the music. Want it serious?

P: Yeah. Go, Al.

A: I think out of like other alternative music, like hardcore and all that other kind of stuff, that classic punk is more timeless than most of the other kinds of styles, like the melodic kinda stuff.

T: I, got really sick of hearing lots of formula hardcore bands playing too fast. And the thing that really pissed me off, or get me bored with the whole hardcore thing, was bands weren't singing anymore. They weren't, you know, they were screaming and yelling and they thought that anyone who was loud could be a singer, and it's like I wanted to do something with more melody. More about music.

P: Don't get us wrong, we love hardcore, we love old hardcore. It's just that, it's progressed lately into something that we're not really into. They do the formula sound that's popular. They do the mosh parts that everybody moshes it up to, and it's like you can see five or six bands and it'll put you to sleep. And you know it's all a bunch of people getting off on this one thing, 'cause that's what's in style, and we got more into just playing our instruments and doing our own thing. For the music of it.

-- Didn't you think naming yourselves Nobody's Heroes would pigeonhole you (kind of like a Maximum Rock N Roll review?)

A: It did.

P: It kinda has.

A: But it's a good name anyway.

T: We talked about that, and if we're gonna be associated with a band, I mean why not be associated with one of the best? When I got the idea for the name, I wasn't really heavily into Stiff Little Fingers as I got. My friend was a huge SLF fan and he always wanted to have a band called Nobody's Heroes, and we used to have a really dumb name, so I called this guy and said "There'll be a band called Nobody's Heroes now."

-- What was the dumb name?

T: We were once called Common Ground. Pretty wishy-washy.

Chris: Press washy-washy.

-- How long has the band been together? What happened to the lineup on your first demo?

C: The band's been around for 2 1/2 years. We started the band when we all met at Pratt, that was like 2 1/2 years ago.

P: And it's gone through numerous, numerous changes.

T: Yeah, and we had an all-star lineup, including the guy that at one point played guitar, than bass, Steve Karp, from Yuppicide. He played in the band for a long time. And at one point, I was playing bass, and we had a lot of problems with bass players, and then finally God gave us Al.

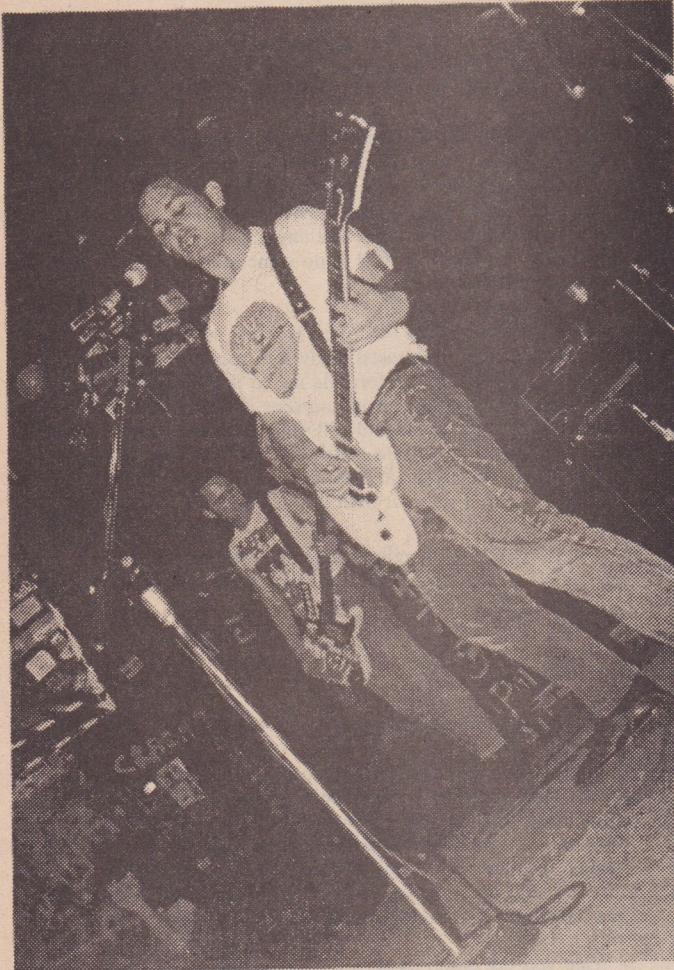
-- How's the demo doing?

T: It's done really well, we've move a lot of copies and people are still asking for it.

P: We've given away most of them, but I guess demos, that's what it's all about. It's not like to get any money or anything. But we just recorded for a single so hopefully that'll be coming out.

T: Any record companies reading this, we're looking for a label. We have three killer songs and we want to do a single.

-- Well, that leads to the next question, wasn't there talk about maybe doing something with Skene Records?



T: We haven't talked anything solid. I talked to Jeff (Spiegel) and said we want to do something, but he's never really given a positive answer one way or the other. So we don't have a deal with Skene or anybody yet.

P: We're just looking, you know, pretty much anyone.

A: (sarcastically) We're looking at Revelation.

T: The funny thing is, I know Jordan from Revelation. From when I worked at the Anthrax.

A: I know Jordan from The Press

T: 'Shame about his hair.

-- Being from NY, how had is it to make waves and get people's attention? Especially since you're not hardcore or straight edge or art-noise.

P: I think that's probably one of the biggest problems we're having. The hard thing about New York is getting out, getting in to clubs. You have to really know who owns the bars, who owns the clubs. You have to have a lot of connections to get a lot of big shows. That's real hard.

T: You have to bust your butt.

P: You really do.

T: It's a real hard city to play in. Especially when you don't have a sound that fits a style that's popular right now. The only band right now that's popular with this sound is the Radicts. And we're not the Radicts. So people are a little bit skeptical about us. We've played some big shows already. We headlined a show at the Pyramid that went real well, and it was a good turn out. And, you know, we're slowing creeping in there. It's gonna take a lot of time and a lot of work.

P: Some of the best bands have been in our situation so we're just hanging in there.

C: Luckily, there are still a lot of Squat Or Rot shows that give bands a chance, and Downtown Beirut's cool.

P: CBGB gave us the stiff.

T: ...We played a killer audition night show there. The crowd loved it, they were asking for more. (laughter) Well, not to sound conceited, but that's what happened.

P: We called them back and (Louise) was like, "You guys were out of tune and you need to practice more." And we were like, we thought we played perfect. That was one of our best shows.

T: And you could've asked anybody at the show... It's also, like, people thinking that we're treading on the Radicts ground a little bit. Like I said, the Radicts are real popular right now and we do something similar, but we're not the Radicts.

P: All you have to do is listen to our stuff.

T: And you'll realize that we're not trying to be like them.

P: We're original. We're just as original as everyone else up there.

T: I think so, yeah. And it changes with each song.

-- So what do you think of the punk scene of late?

A: Which one? Where is it?

T: It's hard to say. It's like, is there a punk scene anymore? It's become so common and it's a genre of its own. Back in the 70's, it was a real counterculture, something really different. Now it's hard to say you're different like that. 'Cause we're not coming up with this. 'Cause we sound like the bands from the 70's. I'm not making any sense here...

A: We don't sound like the bands from the 70's that much.

C: Oh, it's fun.

A: We're influenced by them, but it's not like we're trying to revive them. We're not trying to be revival.

T: I think the punk scene these days is up in the air. There's so many different things going on and they're all unrelated.

A: Actually, since I ever got into music, I've never been involved in any punk scene. I've seen, like, hardcore scenes. There's never been enough actual punk rock bands for there to be a scene. Unless you include peace punk bands and stuff like that.

P: The Squat Or Rot scene is real big.

T: Yeah, there's a lot of those kids that are real heavy duty mohawk kids. There's a lot of those kids around these days and that's cool. It's like really hard to relate it to the punk rock music like it used to be. 'Cause everyone is playing much harder stuff now.

P: Which is cool. Nausea's a good band. It's just different.

T: It's not what it used to be...

-- If you could be on any label, which one would you pick?

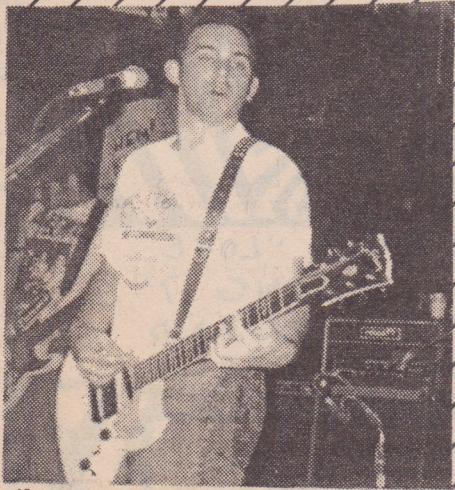
P: The label of our choice?

T: Every one. You know. Capitol. (laughter) Epic. CBS.

P: SST.

T: We don't have any political thing against any label.

A: In-Effect.



Deviators photos by Tom Angelli

T: HARDER THAN YOU.

P: Dischord.

T: If somebody offers us a good deal. We just want to get records out, at a reasonable price, and have 'em sound good and have as many people as possible get 'em. So we'll do a record with just about anybody.

-- Favorite band, past and present?

A: Umm, present...us. (laughter) No, I can't have a favorite band. I could give you examples, there are like a million.

T: There's so many.

A: Of course, Stiff Little Fingers, we're all really into.

P: Bad Religion, Naked Raygun.

C: Poison Idea, the Damned, if anyone has any rare Damned singles; contact me.

A: The Mentors.

C: Youth Of Today.

A: S.O.D.

T: The Del Vikings.

C: Voi Vod.

A: You want us to run down some of the bands we like a lot?

P: The Hard-Ons. I love the Hard-Ons. The Fiendz, they're a great band.

T: Yeah, I mean, it's so hard to say a favorite band. The Clash is way high up there.

P: The Jam.

T: 999. Actually, I've been listening to a lot of Jam lately.

P: The list goes on and on.

T: Pretty much all 50's rock and roll.

(and they name just about every band imaginable...you get the point.)

-- (generic question) Anything to add?

T: In the words of The Judge, it's some cheesey courtroom scene, at the end of every show he says, "Be good to each other."

C: Eat pudding and ski.

P: Wow. I have no closing comment, that's my comment..

C: Just be careful out there.

P: Just look for us in the future, look for our single. Come check us out.

T: And record labels, we have a hot new tape we want to press on vinyl. Write to us. Let's make a deal.

The Deviators, 219 Washington Ave, Brooklyn NY 11205

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INCINERATE - Demo

LAM Music, PO Box 788, Garfield NJ 07026

Sometimes it's the little things that tip you off about a band. Like, for instance, Incinerate's logo. It's a bunch of hokey-looking flames surrounding their name with a small skull dotting the I. The tip off, though, is the small skull, which looks like the lion from the Wizard of Oz or maybe Garfield, altho I guess either way, it's not a good thing. Obviously, not a far reach for originality. And so, the first and third songs -- "Endless Dreams" and "Temptation" -- are unimaginative and much like the flames, typical to the point of banal. The cuts drip with Satanic allusions, but the effect is unsensational and, in fact, Incinerate's best tune and the one unburdened by Satanic references is "So U Want To Try Moshing," which sounds like Pigmy Love Circus in a really bad mood.

The recording lacks the power that's obviously essential to Incinerate's live show, and the murky sound dries up even the rawest and bloodiest of spots. Lead vocalist Jim does voracious Java Man impersonations with his vocals. A stab at melody might not be an unreasonable idea for him. Overall, Incinerate's demo has its flaws but with maturity and lyrical growth should come a more definitive and original sound.

BAD DOG BAD - Demo

BDB, PO Box 2472, Bloomfield NJ 07003

Bad doesn't describe Bad Dog Bad. Either does dreadful, although it's closer. Unbearable kinda smacks the sucker right on the head. Admittedly, Bad Dog Bad aren't reaching for innovation with this self-titled tape, but that doesn't excuse them for writing lame tunes mired in lame cliches. Ode to beer tunes just don't cut it anymore, no matter how many beer balls have succumbed to these guys. Otherwise, singer Mike Beniush is a screamer from the I-Can't-Sing-So-I'll-Yell School, his lyrics are laughable, and his band plays derivative music so sloppily, you'd think they invented the whole drunken-attitude attitude.

On its single positive note, the demo was recorded at Water Studios, which is fast becoming the studio of choice for indie and local bands. But regardless of the recording quality, you can't whitewash bad songs and an inconsistent mix. The warp-speed solos appear electronically juiced up and sound overdubbed. Obviously, we know they are, but they don't have to SOUND that way. Yet I imagine guitarist Paul Cardot scores with many a hair-sprayed clammy-handed metal hoe with those solos, so my point is debatable.

The band also produced its own video for the song "Don't Give A Damn," which shows a lot of resourcefulness. It's full of low-budget rah-rah clips showing the boys playing, hanging in bars, and sluggin' Jack Daniels in the back of a car. The song features the trivial Me Against The World theme, like I haven't heard that before. And anyway, drummer Mike Pomponio is wearing a Corona Beer t shirt in the band photos. Hey, are these guys Yup or something?

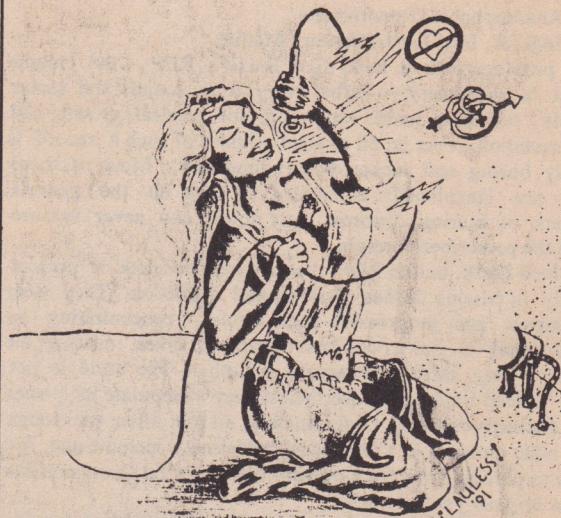
HARD STREET - "Big Time, Big City" (demo)

As strange as this sounds, Hard Street sounds like Kiss' Paul Stanley screwing with speed metal. Really. No, really, it's cool. It's only a one-song tape but "Big Time, Big City" has a head-stomping beat and wholly fun-filled, shout-along chorus. The production is abysmal, with all the guitar parts, sans solos, distorted beyond any comprehensible recognition. But if fuzz is played loud, played with attitude, and fronted by a Paul Stanley soundalike, then essentially, there's nothing to do except bang your head. Now where's the album, dudes?

CRASH SERVICE -- Demo

Crash Service lead singer Rich Bosisio has a smooth, richly textured voice that blends perfectly with his band's Winger wannabe pop metal. His voice raises Crash Service above the surplus of Jersey bands who see Bon Jovi and Skid Row's success as a ticket out of Trenton.

HARD ROCK



By CRAIG DONNER

The opening cut, "Deseree," is a standard mid-tempo corporate rocker, complete with catchy melody and flashy solo. "On My Way" is bubblegum acoustic gushing with tear-jerking harmonies and passion-strained vocals. The final cut, "Out Of Control," although deluged with juvenile lyrics and the always inspiring Motley Crue boom-boom drum sound, has a hook big enough to catch Jaws, and wraps up a catchy, albeit unoriginal, three-pack of songs. If Crash Service can stop slobbering over MTV long enough to write tunes with substance, cold Wednesday nights at Studio One will be a thing of the past.

HARMZWAY -- "While We've Got The Time" video

Amazing Maze, PO Box 282, Cranbury NJ 08512

The three guys in Harmzway peer lustfully into the camera at every conceivable moment. They also go barechested more often than not and of course, they wear lots and lots of leather. Obviously they watch lots of MTV. This clip is the quintessential Headbanger's Ball vid, only not as fancy and without the big-chested girls in heat fawning over the band's every move. Although that might be something to work towards. As for the actual video, black and white shots are interspersed with slow-motion scenes, all following the band's headbangin' fancy stage moves and the towel-snappin' good time they have playing together. Just got one question: Why is singer Carmen Bitonti sporting the Ted Nugent Superman cape? Sometimes you just gotta avoid the pressures of rock 'n roll.

MORGOTH - The Eternal Fall, Resurrection Absurd (Century Media)

How do you conceivably form an opinion on a record so bad that your greatest compliment, other than you didn't die from listening to it, is that no one died during its recording? Similarly, how do you lower your standards to such a snake's belly level that you feel prostituted for just playing the thing in your car stereo?

Death metal sucks. It's generally just a bunch of guys who play noise simply for the sake of noise, and who pay little attention to the musical side of things. Incredibly, Morgoth brings this to a new level. On this lp, the band proves nothing beyond the fact that they can play really really fast. The lead grunter (his name is nowhere to be found on the sleeve) has so much reverb on his voice, it's out of fuckin' control.

HARD ROCK by Craig Donner

RDP - Anarkophobia (Roadrunner)
ICED EARTH, Iced Earth (Century Media)

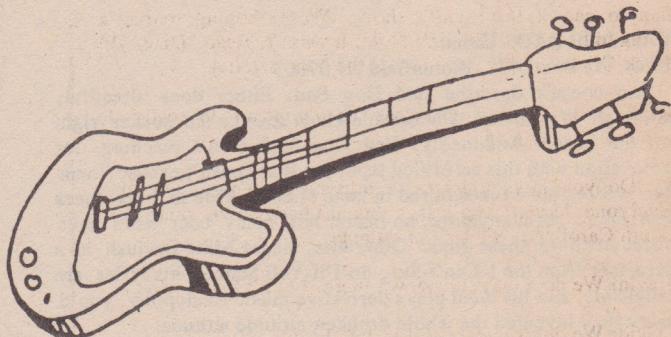
The problem with a band like Brazil's RDP - the enigma inherent in speedmetal - is that every song sounds the same. Arguably, the style leaves little room for musical growth and experimentation. Fact is, 50 straight minutes of such a record is painfully boring and inexcusably rudimentary. Most of these groups are inexplicably compelled to keep up the genre's trademark of blaring, distorted, ugly noise, and never venture beyond the prescribed formula.

For Iced Earth, unlike RDP, the core of speedmetal is present but only in passing flashes of power and distortion. They steer their music into progressive rock circles, concentrating on melodic tones in lieu of constant thrash; at times, nearing the sounds of very early Queensryche or Lethal. The style is not unique to Iced Earth, but nevertheless they manipulate its pieces for a distinctive sound. Unfortunately, all too often the songs follow what amounts to a very strict guideline -- melodic and fast to slow to plodding and back to fast - creating a rut that manifests itself in original yet flat tracks.

For instance, on the song "Written On The Walls," blazing guitar riffs ease into a less hectic tempo, then into an acoustic break. The tune eventually comes full circle. Had this formula been employed on maybe half the cuts instead of all of them, it would have worked. Instead, Iced Earth beats the proverbial horse to death. Throughout, the pieces don't always fit snugly, but sacrificing cohesion is preferable to giving up on creativity, so here I'm more inclined to let the odd grammatical tense shift slip by.

All of which leads us back to RDP. Like their speed metal peers, RDP haven't quite mastered such musical mysteries as melody and harmony, let alone a consonant tone here or there. They still haven't realized ten songs can sound like ten songs and still maintain a raw, fast and uncompromising edge. Their other problem is their undeveloped lyrical style; blurting out singular words associated with a topic isn't lyric writing as much as it is brainstorming. Although RDP show a keen awareness of social events, it's all relative. A lyric like "living insanity/terror, alienation/killing/anarchy" doesn't make any point about anarchy other than the fact that there's fear connected with it.

Headbangers, show you're not afraid of anarchy. Send your hard rock and heavy metal demos and indie releases for review to HARD ROCK c/o Jersey Beat, 418 Gregory Ave, Weehawken NJ 07087.



INCINERATE

by Jim Testa

The Junk Monkeys are four guys from Detroit who you'd never mistake for anything but a rock and roll band. They've got the scruffy hair, the flannel shirts, the wiseguy attitude. And the chops.

Their new album, Five Star Fling (their second lp on Metal Blade), is a non-stop celebration of rock and roll popcraft, full of great hooks and energy. For the record, the band is David Bierman, vocals and guitar; Dave Bouettete, guitar; Danny Allen, drums; and Kevin Perri, bass. I met up with David and Kevin at the CBGB Pizza Boutique the evening they were supposed to play CBGB. (More on that elsewhere.) Dan and Dave were sort of hanging around and stuck their two cents in somewhere in the course of our conversation. Just as we were about to start, David pulled out a pack of cigarettes and Kevin started yelling at him. No, he wasn't trying to quit, he was just fighting a hoarse throat...

Q: So we're having vocal trouble, are we?

David: Yeah, in fact I lost my voice altogether in Albany. We had to cancel last night's show. We're hoping tonight's going to be AOK. [Editor's Note: It wasn't. Read "Diary Of A Rock Critic" in this issue for all the gory details]

Kevin: Just numb your throat. Then you can do really do some serious damage.

Q: Do you guys tour the South more than the North? Everyone I know who's seen you has been down south, in South Carolina or Florida or Atlanta...

Kevin: We do a lot better down there. I don't know why.

David: We don't understand it, but we do.

Q: Most bands hate going south, they say the audiences are murder there.

Kevin: Number one, it's warm, and it's cold here.

David: We do much better down south. The Northeast is...traditionally real bad for us. But the west and the south are our major support. The Northeast and even the Midwest really aren't very good for us. But the South has always been kind to us.

Kevin: People are more nuts there.

David: More starved for entertainment, probably.

Q: Is this the longest tour you've done so far?

David: No. Last year around this time we did two months. So it's pretty much...it's a long tour but...

Kevin: We're doing a lot more shows this time.

David: Yeah, like where last time we did 30 shows in 60 days, this time we're doing 45 or 50 shows this time. So we're working every night, basically.

Kevin: It's better to play every night. You keep busy. Otherwise you get bored if you spend too much time sitting around. Last time luckily, most of the time we spent sitting around was in San Francisco, so at least there were things to do.

Q: Yeah, I guess like Iowa City would be a bad place to have a long layover.



THE JUNK MONKEYS

'We're probably

the only good

rock and roll band

from Detroit'

David: Although I like Iowa City, actually.

Kevin: Try Albuquerque.

David: Try Las Cruces, New Mexico. The worst city in the United States, bar none.

Kevin: Bar none!

David: And we're going back this tour.

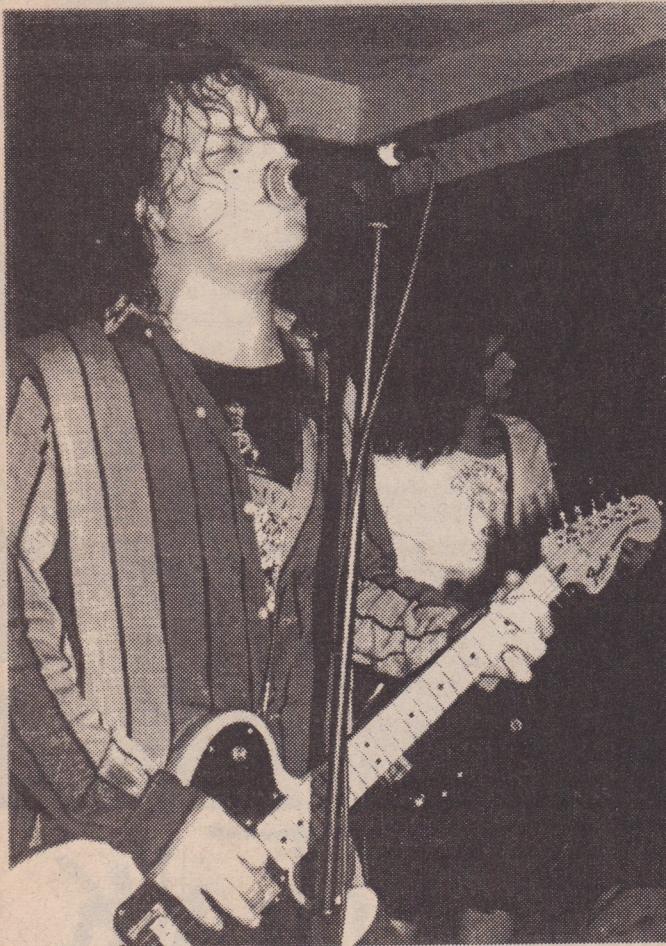


Photo by Jim Testa

Kevin: They have postcards of the skyline...and it's just flat. There are no buildings there.

David: Now Austin's a wonderful town.

(A brief discussion of SXSW ensues, which we shall skip, but the conversation turns to Austin as a college town, the sort of city with which the boys are all too familiar...)

David: College towns are for the most part pretty overrated. People think college towns are hotbeds for new music but...

Kevin: Why would college kids be hipper than anyone else? They're just kids who just get out of high school.

David: Most of the college towns that we play, it's mostly the townies who come out. People who like graduated and hung around, or work at the school. Those seem to be the hip people.

Kevin: Like Columbia (South Carolina), Erie. There's a bunch of colleges there but we hardly see any college students at our shows.

Q: It's like New Brunswick in NJ. Rutgers is there but you don't see a lot of college students at shows.

Kevin: Because they listen to Bobby Brown.

Q: That's a funny opinion for you to have, since you'd probably be pigeonholed as a "college radio" band.

David: Yeah, the problem we have with that is that most college radio people see us as too rock and roll. There's no real edge, we're not doing anything strange or weird. We don't sound like a Sub-Pop band, we don't sound like an Amphetamine noise band. We're just basically a rock pop band and they have a problem with that.

Q: I was trying to think of a band that you do sound like and I couldn't think of anybody.

David: That's good. I'm glad you didn't use the "R" word. We get a lot of the Replacements comparisons.

Q: It's the flannel shirts.

Kevin: They don't wear flannel shirts!

David: Now they wear suits... I listen to our record, I try to listen to it as objectively as possible, which I know is impossible. But... I'm a huge Replacements fan, so it doesn't bother me when people say we sound like them, but musically it's not real close. I think we come from two different areas.

Kevin: And I'm not ten years younger than everybody else in the band, and I'm the bass player.

Danny: If we could write songs as good or as near as good as they do, I'd just be happy with that.

Q: Speaking of writing songs, I notice on the record that you give co-writing credit to everybody in the band on all the songs.

Do you do that just for camaraderie purposes, or do you really all write together?

David: The songs are mostly written by myself and the guitar player (Dave Bouettete). I write all the lyrics and I write about half the music, give or take. But when we bring them in, we don't tell Kevin or Dan, the rhythm section, how to play their parts.

Kevin: We wanted our money or we were gonna quit.

David: No, it's just... I don't tell them how to play their specific parts, so it just seemed the thing to do.

'Why would college students

be hipper than anyone else?

They're just kids who just

got out of high school'

Q: It doesn't mean a whole lot right now, but if the record starts to really sell, like with what happened to R.E.M., then it will mean a lot in terms of money.

David: Somebody just brought that up the other day. Especially since just before we started recording Five Star Fling, we submitted about ten or 12 songs, and the record company, about two weeks before we went into the studio, said, "about four or five of these songs we don't really like. Write some more." So for about two weeks I was pulling my hair out, sitting down on my couch, playing songs all day, trying to write new songs.

Q: Which are some of the instant ones?

David: "I Don't Mind," "Skipping Stones," and "Wigshop" were all done that way. "Skipping Stones" was written about a week before we went into the studio. So people were saying, when I was tearing my hair out, "hey, you should be getting the credit." But I don't know, we're a band band. We're all friends.

Kevin: They hate all my songs.

David: You don't write any songs.

Kevin: I do. But it's a lot harder for me to come in and say, here's a song. I'm the bass player.

Dan: Dave might say, play the drums like this, as opposed to this, but...

David: I would probably tell him what I don't want, as opposed to what I do want him to play. If he did something I didn't like, I would tell him. But we've been playing together for so long that it's an intuitive thing now.

Q: How long has this been going on?

David: Seven years, we've all been playing together. It was 1986 when the Junk Monkeys came together, that's when we started getting serious.

Q: How old were you when you started?

David: I was 17.

Kevin: Dan was 16, the rest of us were 17.

David: So it's been the same four guys for that long. We're a "band" band. You know, I like being in a band. I wouldn't want to be like Westerberg, writing songs for myself. Everybody knows now it's not the Replacements anymore, it's Paul Westerberg and His Replacements. It might as well say that on the album cover.

Q: How's the van holding up?

David: Super, so far. We have a long way to go yet.

Q: For the record, give me the model and everything.

David: 1986 Ford Club Wagon.

Kevin: XLT.

Q: The van's as old as the Junk Monkeys.

David: Yeah, it's as old as the Junk Monkeys.

Kevin: It has as many miles on it too.

Danny: We logged 13,000 last year, just on the one tour. All told we probably did about 18,000 miles last year.

Kevin: It's got a big dent in the back bumper, just like we do.

David: We'll probably put on close to 19,000 on this tour. So it's a fine van. It's got an alarm on it too, just for New York City.

Q: Do you have any hometown bands you want to tout to the rest of the country?

Kevin: Hometown? How hometown? How close do they have to be?

David: There's a band from Battle Creek called The Sinatras that are an incredible trio.

Q: So you're the only good band from Detroit?

David: No! Well...yeah, actually, probably you're right. We're probably the only good rock and roll band from Detroit. And I would be more than happy to put that on record. Because there's not many great rock and roll bands from Detroit. You'd think there would be, but...

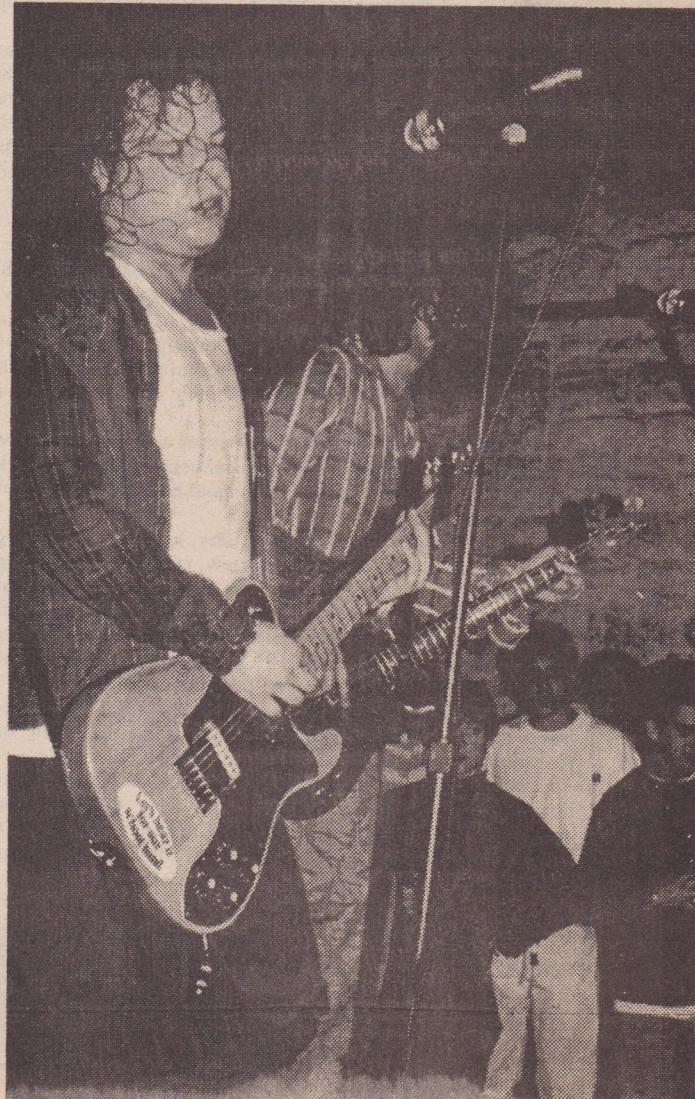


Photo by Jim Testa

Very Small RECORDS

by John Lisa

August, 1989, marked the beginning of one of the coolest record labels in the big world of punk rock - Very Small Records. It's run by soft-spoken wildman David Hayes, who you may remember as being the co-producer of the now big-time underground label, Lookout, owned and operated by MRR's inciteful columnist, Lawrence Livermore. David left Lookout in '89 to do his own thang, stargazing out with a limited pressrun of the demos of California's thrash revolutionaries, Corrupted Morals.

The Very Small catalog now includes hardcore heroes Econochrist, newcomers Nuisance, dissonant melodic noisemakers and Jersey Beat faves Jawbreaker, and the strange groundbreakers, Plaid Retina, who have been at it for some time.

Very Small compilations have features bands like the Mr. T Experience, the underrated punk of the emo/melodic Offspring, the trying, singalong pain of the legendary Crimpshine, and the madcap mayhem of Screeching Weasel. The packaging (picture sleeves, booklets, posters, stickers, multi-colored wax) for all this has brought FUN back into the record scene as Very Small has repeatedly set new trends for 90's punk rock. Most of Very Small's records get distributed to stores by a company called Revolver, and the rest are sold either through Blacklist or direct mail orders. The records are kept bargain priced, \$3 for the 7 inches and \$5 for the trademark 10-inch records and 12-inch albums.

Although many of Very Small's releases come on colored vinyl and have super packaging, the musical content is never lacking. The label is fairly diverse and each band has given 100% on all recorded performances.

David is also a talented tour organizer, having set up and gone on tours with Plaid Retina and the new, raw New Mexican punk rock outfit 23 More Minutes. Very Small has also revitalized interest in the 10" record, a format that was introduced briefly in the '60's and then largely forgotten until Very Small brought it back. Now most of the early 10" Very Small releases are highly sought after by collector scum all over the world.

With 13 releases behind him, David has really built a credible name for his label, and with a track record like this, you should realize that anything on this label is immediately buyable.

I was going to end this by playing a joke and encouraging all new bands to send David a demo, knowing full well that he absolutely HATES getting tapes. But I'm sure he wouldn't think it was funny. Instead, you should write for his catalog of current releases and keep your eyes peeled for a new double-lp compilation called Very Small World, as well as a new 7-inch from 23 More Minutes.

23 MORE MINUTES

SCHLONG
NUISANCE
23 MORE MINUTES
JAWBREAKER



PO BOX 8223
EMERYVILLE CA 94662



PLAID RETINA

by Shawn Scallen

The Butthole Surfers are rock and roll gods, but even gods have their bad days. This interview was done after a shortened set in Toronto, Canada. The band were held up at the border for hours, they didn't play their full set, and they were generally irate towards the promoters, backstage groupies with shoe fetishes, and border guards. Things were pretty tense. This was an impromptu interview with guitarist Paul Leary.

Q: So you're back in Canada. What do you think of it?

Paul: I love Canada. I'm never coming back.

Q: Why not?

Paul: It's a hassle, man. It's a hassle. It took us around five hours to get across the border. The worst of the problems came from the U.S. Customs. We pay our taxes. We try to come over here and take Canadian dollars and bring them back home to Uncle Sam and they find hash on us. They don't like us.

Q: Wouldn't they be smart enough to realize you're not stupid and you're not going to bring hash across the border?

Paul: They realize that. However, they have children in elementary schools and they're members of the PTA. Our naked dancer has spread corn nuts on their desk and they don't forget.

Q: What do you think of bootlegging? Along with the Dead and the Cure, you're probably one of the more bootlegged bands in the world.

Paul: Well, I definitely think those guys at Latino Burger Veil Records owe us money for that double-live bootleg they put out. I know they must have made a mint, because they sold them for a pretty high dollar and they definitely put one over on us. We're going to be in touch with Latino Burger Veil Records very soon, I hope.

Q: I think they're basically a big rip off.

Paul: yeah...well...yeah. Rock and roll is a rip off. What's really disturbing is the fact that the Jackofficers may be signing with Latino Burger Veil Records. We are very close friends with the Jackofficers [Paul is pulling our leg; the Jackofficers are Leary and lead Butthole Gibby's industrial noise offshoot project] and we were sort of hoping that they'd be on the Blind Mommy Vomit label that we're getting ready to establish, but it looks like they might be signing with Latino Burger Veil Records.

Q: Last time you were in town, you had a larger band. What happened to everybody, especially Theresa?

Paul: Theresa, I don't know. The last time she came into this town, we had to put her into hospital immediately after the show. As you can understand, she did not care to frequent the establishment after that.

Q: Is she still in the band?

Paul: Ummm, I don't know. Am I still in the band?

Q: What's it like living in a small town like Driftwood, Texas, when you guys are international rock stars?

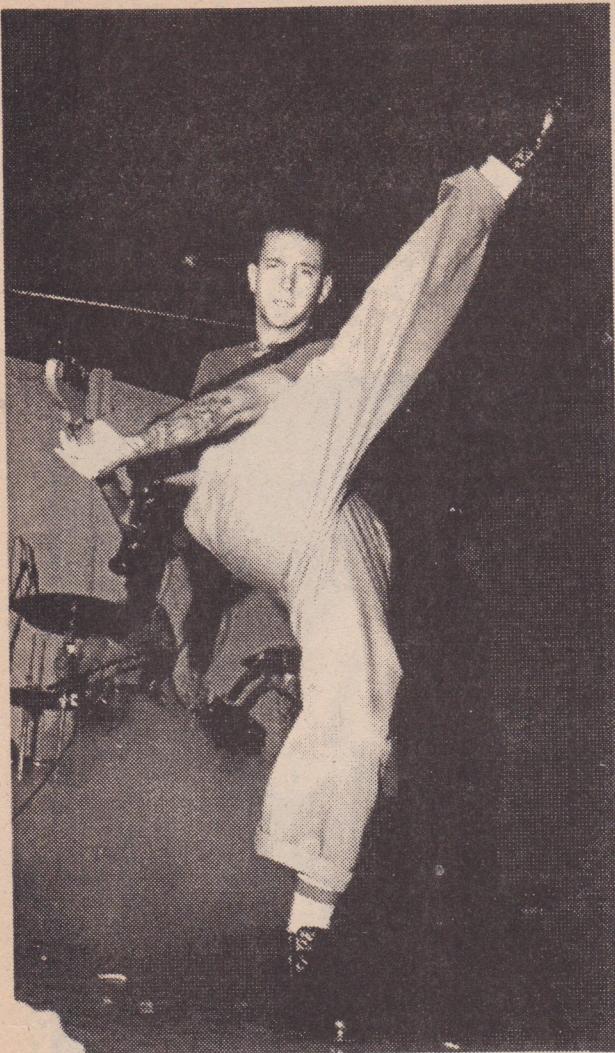
Paul: The cattle and the sheep really dig it a lot. There are a lot of goats there as well. Jack, the postman, takes us fishing on Saturdays. The Fundamental Baptists down at the church don't know anything. We own the town.

Q: How big is the town?



Surfing On Anal Canals

Butthole Surfer photos by Shawn Scallen



Paul: It's not really a town. We moved there because there's absolutely no police department and there's supposed to be a fire dept. but the fire engine hasn't run in about four years now, and they don't think it would start in the event of a fire. Well, we live in the hill country, and it's God's country. Our friends basically drive off the road and roll their cars over and get really hurt trying to come out and visit us, so we're very lonely.

Q: What sort of plans do you have for the surrounding area, development-wise?

Paul: Montana. I'm moving to Montana.

Q: Why?

Paul: There's not very many people in Montana.

Q: What happens when you run out of places in the world where there aren't very many people?

Paul: You avoid the sub-harmonic booms that you associate large concentrations of people in cars and things that you just can't get away from. People far, when they fart it smells bad and their cars smell bad. They make a lot of bad noises.

Q: But what's next after all the land in the world's filled up?

Paul: Are you talking about nuclear holocaust?

Q: No, I'm just saying when you run out of places to go where there are no people.

Paul: Well, there's lots of places with no people, but once you go there, there are people there, so it's kind of self-defeating.

Q: What, in your mind, are the Butthole Surfers all about?

Paul: It's all about making money, so that you don't have to... I won't say what I don't have to do, but, you make some money, you get a little, and um, you get a little tongue. The Butthole Surfers are basically about trying to establish a non-establishmentarianism attitude towards a direct confrontational attitude with longitudinally revolutionary ideals towards a marbilistic cannabilistic institutionalized form of German Menudo.

A Leary Look

At The

Lighter Side

Q: What sort of gadgets do you have in your recording studio, and how much have you blown?

Paul: Yeah, we blow our money on the studio. Fucking 'A, man. We got no tv, what else are we to fucking do? We got liquid diode equalizers, we got elephantitis reverbs, and quantized alphabetized excitors. We got our bi-laterally tracked computer which more or less does the work for us, so that we can sleep in late and when we wake up, the fucking records are already done. It's pretty surprising what they can come up with in computers.

Q: You guys plan on sharing your technology with the Soviets?

Paul: I thought we were using Soviet technology. We're not? I don't know, it's a Conrad Johnson computer; what is that, is that Japanese? I drive a Japanese...whaddaya call them? I drive a Tsunami.

Q: If you could be any flavor of ice cream, what flavor would it be?

Paul: Cocky Road.

Q: Why?

Paul: Because my cock is in the ice.

Q: How big is it?

Paul: You saw it tonight and I wouldn't care to elaborate beyond that. I'm sure there'll be photographs published in books and things about my penis in the ice.

Last January, just about the same time that the war in Iraq began, I started corresponding with Oded Tal, a young Israeli living in a kibbutz. I had a read a little about kibbutz life and pictured it as austere and conservative, so I was surprised to hear that my new pen pal not only published a fanzine but was in a punk band. Here are some questions about life as a Israeli punk rocker which he answered through the mail.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROBLEMS OF BEING A PUNK IN ISRAEL?

Oded: First of all, the access to records is very poor. You can't find many records and if you do, they cost a lot. Punks here are usually "macho style show offs" and they are usually rich, so they don't mind buying records for \$20. They take the money from their parents. This kind of punk listens to bands such as GBH, Exploited, Crass, Dead Kennedys, and SOD. As you see, they go for the famous bands only. The style changes from punk to hardcore to thrash to deathmetal to metal, so these people just keep listening to whatever is popular. Gigs are very poor too, only a few bands are able to play a gig, but when there is a show, there is usually quite a lot of people. I live at the north part of Israel where there are hardly any punks and if I want to go see a show, I have to go four hours by bus (which costs a lot).

DOES YOUR BAND HAVE TROUBLE GETTING EQUIPMENT, AMPS, PRACTICE SPACE?

Israel is a much more modern country than most people think. It's the most modern country in the middle east and you can find everything every, some expensive and some cheap. My band has two small 50 watt amps, two electric guitars (both Washburns, nothing fancy), a lousy set of drums, a bass, and that's it. We're now looking for another amp (to use as a p.a.). We've also got a practice room which belongs to the kibbutz. Basically, I guess we can't complain! Guitar strings and basic little stuff is very easy to get, and they're pretty cheap too. As for gigs, there's this anarchist club called The Left Gada. If you want to play there, it's no trouble. They don't rip you off and they are good guys. This club is in the Tel Aviv area. There's the Penguin Club, which has just been shut down for complaints of Satan ceremonies and all that crap. Punk/hc/thrash/metal bands used to play there but it's a rip off place. There are a few more clubs which will let you play, but they're usually fucked up and their terms are shit.

FANZINES: IS IT HARD AND/OR EXPENSIVE GETTING IT COPIED?

Not at all! The Kibbutz has a good photocopying machine so all you have to do is buy the paper, which isn't expensive.

IS YOUR MAIL CENSORED?

No! Israel is the only democratic country in the middle east and the people will fight against things like that. So no, the mail CAN'T be censored here.

DO YOU HAVE SKATEBOARDS?

Sure! As I said, you can find nearly everything here.



An Israeli newspaper during the war shows scenes of battle. The cartridges laying on top of the paper are antidote vials for poison gas attacks.



My name is Oded Tal and I live in a Kibbutz in the north of Israel. I know some of you already know what a Kibbutz is, but this article is for those of you who haven't read or heard anything about Kibbutz life.

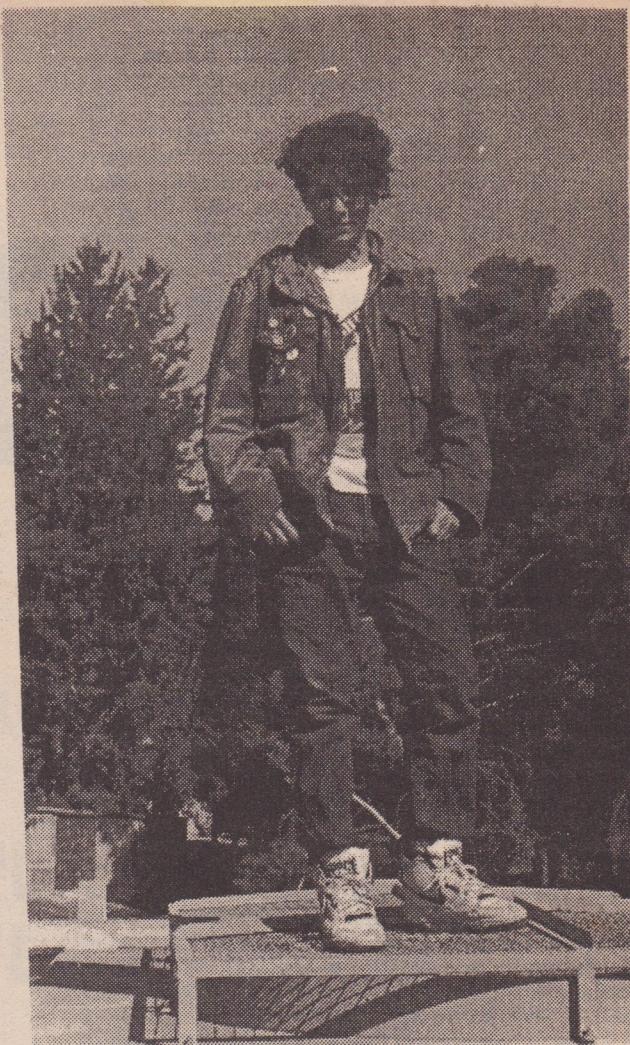
The first Kibbutz was settled in 1909 by a few idealists who were inspired by the principles of socialism. They found themselves in the land of Palestine, which was an almost unpopulated and desolate land. It was full of swamps, which bred malaria and other diseases. These settlers found themselves surrounded by a hostile environment, a harsh climate, by disease, and by marauding gangs. Some of their number were lost. Worst of all, the settlers discovered that the veteran farmers preferred the cheap labor of the local inhabitants. It was the lack of work that finally drove the settlers to seek independent settlement of the land.

Today there are more than 100,000 men, women and children living in over 300 Kibbutz settlements across Israel. In each Kibbutz, there are 200-1500 people (depending on its size) of all ages. There is no general rule for judging the differences between the internal operations of each Kibbutz. Each community differs in its mode of life and social customs and this depends on the size, how long it's existed, and the ideas of the individual members in the particular Kibbutz. Although essentially each Kibbutz is a self-governing unit, there are limitations - they all belong to nationally organized Kibbutz movements. Today there are four such Kibbutz movements, which provide guidance and financial assistance to their individual units and represent them to the various authorities. The Kibbutz can't exist without the partnership and trust between the members, because that's the main basis of a Kibbutz. Everyone in the Kibbutz works according to his/her abilities; people work in different jobs such as the factory, the dining room, electrician, bookkeeper, managers, etc. Of course, old and sick people aren't expected to work equally and they contribute as much as they can. A man with children works for the children of his comrades. No matter how much money each person earns for the Kibbutz, everyone receives an equal amount of money. Most of the money the Kibbutz has earned goes to building houses, electricity, education (school, university, etc.), food, water, basic electric stuff like a tv, fridge, phones, etc., child care, a swimming pool and different sports facilities, medical care, and so on. So the money you get might not be very much, but you can do with it whatever you want when you know that your basic needs of everyday life have been covered.

Not every Kibbutz has equal financial success, therefore people might be able to get better facilities and more money in one Kibbutz than in another. But sometimes you can find sharing between different Kibbutz settlements, like a school shared by a number of communities. Sometimes, a rich Kibbutz will help a Kibbutz with financial problems.

About once a week, there's a meeting for all the Kibbutz members (18+) and they discuss different problems and ideas. Then there's a vote and everybody can say his point of view. Volunteers from all over the world come to the Kibbutz to help out and see how it goes. As a volunteer, you get a room (sometimes with other roommates), food, water, and a small budget to spend in the little Kibbutz non-profit shop. There's a pub open a few days a week for the volunteers and parties every now and then. Some volunteers find it very nice, and come back to the Kibbutz after they leave, while others don't care for this way of life.

Medical care in the Kibbutz is socialized, so if you require really expensive medical treatment, it is always available and paid for. Every Kibbutz has a car, so when you want to go somewhere, you take one of the cars but you have to buy the gas. The main transportation in the Kibbutz is bicycles; after



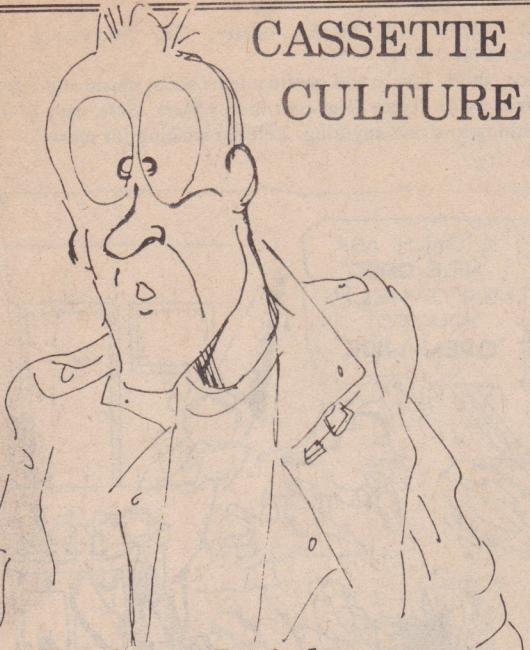
ODED TAL, age 15

all, a Kibbutz isn't really such a big place and you can go anywhere you like, which is really good. As a member of the Kibbutz, you can also bring family or friends; you can arrange for a room for free if someone comes to visit you.

There are also some bad things in the Kibbutz. Some people don't do their share of the work, knowing they'll get their pay anyway. And some people can't learn to live and work together and always have stupid arguments. And it's also happened that people took money for themselves out of the factory's income (they usually get kicked out of the Kibbutz).

If you're interested in more information about visiting or volunteering in a Kibbutz, try writing to the Volunteer Department, 12 Leonardo da Vinci St., Tel Aviv 61400 ISRAEL. Also, if you're curious about life in Israel, please write to me. I will write back to everyone. Peace, love, anarchy, and equality for all,

Oded Tal
Kibbutz Dan
12245, DNGE
ISRAEL



CASSETTE CULTURE

By Rodney Leighton

Welcome to the 2nd installment of this column. I sure hope somebody is getting something out of it besides me. I don't know if I should be writing reviews of music or not, since I couldn't carry a tune in a canteen and not only can't I play an instrument, I can't even distinguish one from another lots of times. About all I can try and do is tell you what something sounds like and what I happened to think of it, and hope you find what I have to say worthwhile. Well, let's see what we've got here this time...

ALAN GRANDY: Solo

A couple of "terrible love songs," to quote the guy. I didn't think they were all that bad. Nothing spectacular, just good solid pop. Is there such a thing as garage pop? Alan is the lead singer of The Terrible Parade from Cleveland, by the way.

ALL ABOUT CHAD -- "Japanese Demo In Reverse" (% Ben Reiser, 246 7th Ave #9, Brooklyn NY 11215)

A 4-song (I wish they would fill up the damn tape!) demo. I always liked Traci Lords Ex Lovers, partly because of the name but also due to the laid back, humorous and somewhat gentle pop-tinged scum sound of the band. Half of the Ex Lovers comprise All About Chad, with similiar results. I really liked "23 Strikes You're Out" and "I'm A Dependent." Check these dudes out.

ASHES TO ASHES

This came with a Japanese address but apparently they are planning to move to Montreal. Haven't they heard about our 7% tax on everything, including pay toilets? And, they need a singer and a drummer. Why am I bothering with this? Thrash metal, poorly done. However if you're a singer willing to relocate to Tokyo or Montreal, perhaps you can improve them to decent listenability.

BEATNIKS FROM MARS: "Naked" (Hound Dogma, 190 6th Ave #2FS, New York NY 10013)

Liner has a naked Oriental chick. Tape has 13 numbers ranging from fairly hard rocking to poppy ballads. Some pretty funny stuff. Check out "Ballad Of The Grower." Recorded live at CBGB in NYC. Sounds pretty good. One to keep a while.

BUTTERFIELD 8: Demo (PO Box 16621, Cleveland OH 44116) 10 song demo. Sometimes I get a tape which makes me wish I could write reviews like Jim Testa or perhaps Phil Zambino. This is one of those. Beautiful pop songs, well sung, with perfect backup vocals and music. A highly recommended tape for lovers of pop music. Also available on CD.

CARNIVAL OF SHAME: (PO Box 1509, Phila. PA 19103)

The title of this cassette could be either "Ying Yang" or "Go Tell," or neither. The tape cover is fascinating. A 10 song release of funky pop tinged with hard rock and some other stuff. Pretty good sound, good commercial potential, I'd say. "Christine" is my fave. To be played some more.

LARRY O. DEAN: "Prince Charming" (PO Box 191671, San Francisco CA 94119)

11-song release of laid back folk pop. Prosey lyrics sung by one guy with guitar backing. Fair to middling.

DR. SMITH: Demo (180B Merline Ave, W Paterson NJ 07424)

Double decker cassingle -- same two songs on each side. Country rock, quite well done. I liked.

EAST RIVER PIPE: "Point Of Memory" (Barbara Powers, Hellgate Productions, PO Box 6053, Astoria NY 11106)

This is a one-man show and he does a damn good job, provided you like near-commercial pop rock as I do. All 7 tunes are originals, recorded at home. Well worth getting. "Fatherland" is a great song.

EVIL DEAN: Demo (731 W Beaver Ave, State College PA 16801)

Very dark work; all about death. "Eat The Infant" is actually funny, whether intentionally or not. Either very disturbed young men or great tongue in cheek. Get one and decide for yourself.

GREEN LION BURNING: Demo (c/o Tina Maschi, 258 Handy St, New Brunswick NJ 08901)

This is one of the most amazing tapes I have received in some time. On a lime green cassette and with promo material that promised unusual instruments -- aboriginal influences and wild imagery. I wasn't sure what to expect but didn't think it would be much. First time through, it didn't seem that great. However, the thing grows on you. It became intriguing, then interesting; then compelling and almost addictive. A vast array of styles and instrumentation in the 11 pieces. "Genocide" is a mind and soul grabber. A great release. I had to force myself to put it away and do other stuff. Highly recommended.

HAIR CORPSE: Demo (PO Box 283, New York NY 10014)

Three girl band. Sounds like the Bangles without Susannah Hoffs. Perhaps it is?

ILLEGITIMATE SONS OF JACKIE O: "Here Come The Sons" (SNM Prod, Box 472084, Tulsa OK 74147)

Or, "Here Cum Da Sons," depending on whether you read the tape label or the sleeve. A cover of "John Brown's Body" (good) and ten originals, including an instrumental and one that sounds like an Indian death song. These guys actually sing and play on this one a bit. Still, your basic screaming thrash punk. Some funny stuff, tho.

FOLK SONGS OF MIDDLE AMERICA - Compilation cassette (SNM, see above)

Side one has some screaming from the Illegitimate Sons of Jackie O (no wonder she won't claim them!), War Hippies, and some rowdy night club stuff from John Hancock. On side 2, George Usdin actually does a folk song as well as a ditty about trading a ballplayer and some kinky sex. Also, Kinky Pussy, Consumption Fits, and Van Gogh's Ear. Something for almost everybody.

FOLK SONGS OF MIDDLE AMERICA VOL. 2

(yeah, still same address)

Another compilation tape. This one seems partially correctly named: the songs seem to be about middle America, anyway. Definitely not folk songs though. I believe if these guys played in NYC, they'd be called scum rock bands. Do they have scum rock in Middle America? 16 numbers, I think. A couple are sort of folksy, most are straight ahead punk rock. Nine bands including Buttmen, War Hippies, and - surprise - Illegitimate Sons of you know who.

THE MARTINI AGE: Richie (Offramp Prod, 3445 Poplar Ave Ste 6-300, Memphis TN 38111)

An 8-song release of pretty decent pop rock. Homemade production. Fairly cool and laid back with nice lyrics about birthdays and living and stuff. A fun tape. I'll play this one a few more times.

OUTCROWD: Demo

A demo from a Maryland band moved to NJ, which will be of benefit to many folks in that area. The two songs listed on the sleeve are hard pop tunes, complete with serious messages conveyed in a humorous vein. Quite nice.

PARTY AKIMBO: Live (448 Timber Branch Hwy, Alexandria VA 22302)

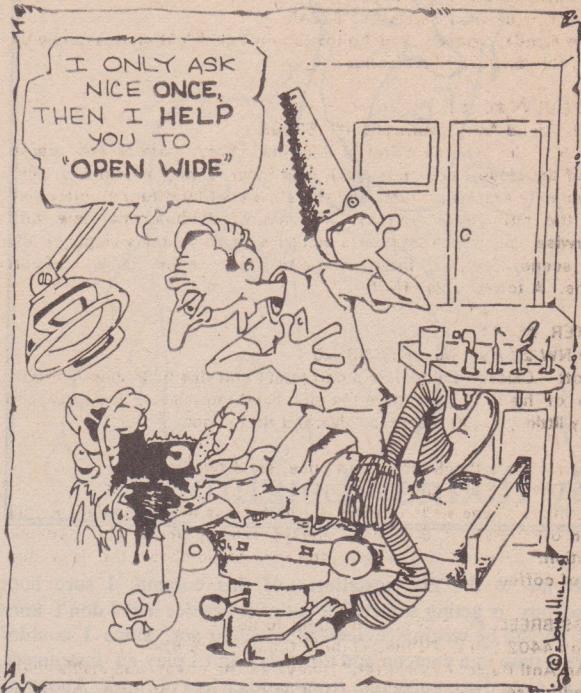
Nine songs recorded live at CBGB and other places. Sort of punky thrash rock, not half bad. I liked the "East Of L.A." song.

PEACE DOG: Demo (Amar Records, Box 117, Whiting NJ 08759)

I believe these boys are admirers of Bon Jovi. The 11 originals range from slower paced ballads to fairly hard rocking. The cover of "Respect" has lead vocalist John Donavan sounding like Jon Bon Jovi with his balls in a vice. I don't doubt these lads will pop up on MTV some day soon.

POEM MUSIC (% Mark Fogarty, 345 Stuyvesant Ave, Lyndhurst NJ 07071)

Six nice, short, lovely and gentle poems set to music and expertly vocalized by ex-Jersey Beat contributor Mark. Soft, easy to listen to. Nothing to strain anything. Left me wishing for more.



Randumb Thoughts

© John Hill '91

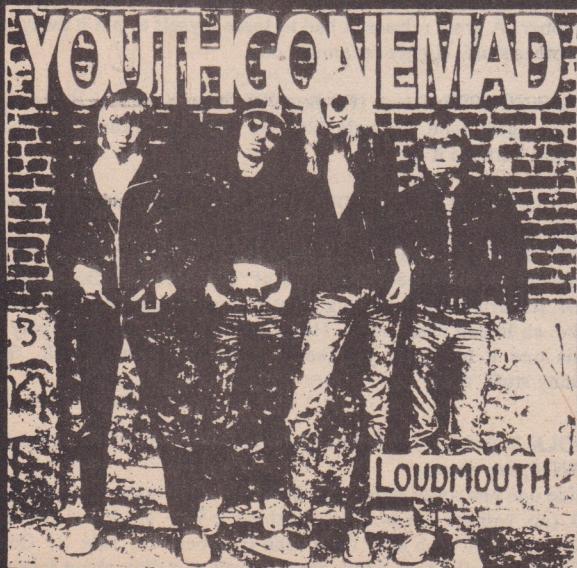
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BLOWIN' CHUNX #2 \$1.50

% Alyssa, 75 Stanton Rd, Brookline MA 02146

Boston hardcore, with Wrecking Crew, Quicksand, Sheer Terror and Kingpin interviews, record reviews, and some badly xeroxed photos. A good place to look if you're heading up to Beantown and want some info on the scene there.

BOUNCING CASKET #1 \$1.50

104 Wilkinson, East Prairie MO 63845

The Fiendz, Undead, and Agnostic Front each get short interviews in this thin but okay first issue.

BUTT UGLY #4 \$1

701 S. Grand Ave, Waukesha WI 53186

In #3, the teenage editor of this zine, Corey, more or less came out of the closet, and now in #4, he's incorporating a "coming out" column as a regular feature, and there's a cool (and funny) interview with the outrageous Johnny Noxzema of Bimbox zine here too. Otherwise this is your standard punkzine, with columns slagging the local scene, reviews, interviews, and a few pages full of concert photos. A totally cool effort.

CARTER #5 \$1

1239 NW 22 Ave, Miami FL 33125

Scott "Carter" Baldwin is a cartoonist and this mini zine collects some of his work, but there are also band interviews, reviews, and freaky little thought pieces on this and that. Cool.

COFFEE - Life's Black Blood (no price, send two stamps)

2288 Hawk, Simi Valley CA 93065

I think this was written expressly to impress Mike Gunderloy, the editor of Factsheet 5, who's always talking about his caffeine addiction. Anyway, it's a cute little mini comic about the joys and evils of coffee drinking.

CROSS BREED #4 ? (3 stamps ought to do it)

PO Box 4402 Stn E, Ottawa Ontario Canada K1S 5B4

"An Anti Racist Newsletter," it says on the cover, and inside there are addresses for lots of fanzines that promote that point of view. There are also band interviews which, surprisingly, deal with a good deal more than racism and include different styles of bands from all over North America, from NY's Nausea to California's Malachi Krunch. Some cool graphics too.

CRUCIFIED No. Zero Two stamps (or trade)

156 E Pulaski Rd, #22B, Huntington Sta, NY 11746

Editor Norm has a chip on his shoulder and a photocopier that prints in blue ink, giving this zine a different look. The reviews rag on the NY/HC a bit although the interviews really don't challenge two fairly controversial bands, Slapshot and Agnostic Front. Kind of skimpy but good reading.

CUT #10 \$2

11 Julian St, Norwich CT 06360

Cut always reminds me of Conflict, in that editor Steve Erickson eschews graphics and photos for plain blocky layouts that are mostly text and a steady diet of reviews and q&a interviews. Interviews are with Sebadoah, Cul De Sac, and Dead C., and the reviews tackle all manner of alternative and art bands. Engrossing reading.

DARK CHAOS #14 \$2

% Ed Stastny, 9018 Westridge Dr, Omaha NE 68124

A handsome 1/2 size zine full of and about fanzine art. Besides Ed's own intriguing drawings, there are interviews with Carrie (you've seen her art in a lot of zines, including NJ's Stranjer) and artist/animated/musician Michael Manning, plus reviews and illustrated poetry and fiction. Amazing.

DETONATOR \$1 (no price give, try \$1)

% Mike Aulhouse, 1547 Embreeville Rd, Downingtown PA 19335

A zine that's supposed to be a "Philly area rag," although the first three bands interviewed are from, variously, Massachusetts, Brooklyn and New Hampshire. The usual mix of interviews and reviews, some photos. The layouts could use a little more variety.

DISSONANCE #1 \$2

% Leif Hunnerman, 14 Louis St, New Brunswick NJ 08901

A New Brunswick fanzine that begins by taking an overview of the Hub City's thriving new-music scene and then expanding its horizons

beyond the city limits. Well written, good looking, and the editor even reviews computer software and gives all the specs on how he puts the zine together on his home pc.

EXCURSION #3 \$1

PO Box 3103, Bellingham WA 98225

A cool halfsize punkzine with the usuals -- reviews, photos, opinion pieces, and interviews with Jawbreaker and my pen pal Joel's band Undertow from the Seattle area.

FOSTER CHILD #7 \$2

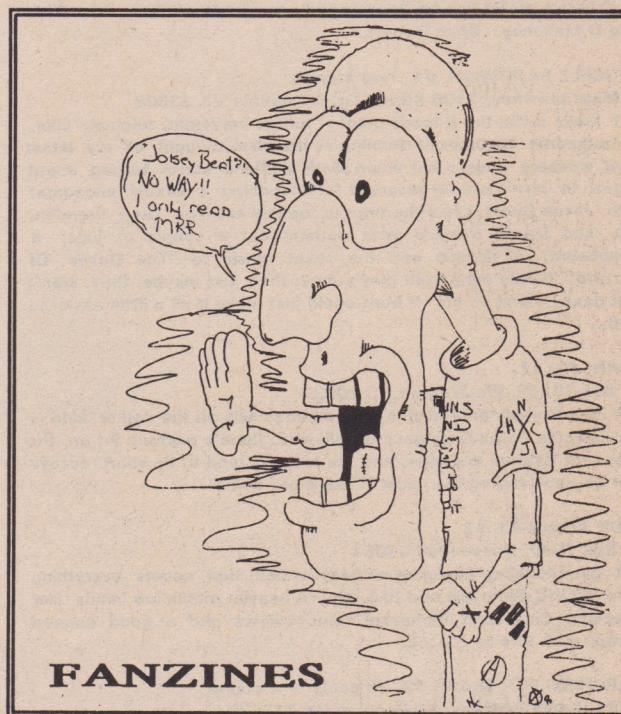
7635 Marcy Ct, Glen Burnie MD 21060

A no-nonsense, straight-ahead fanzine of reviews and interviews, without a lot of thought given to graphics or layout. Still there's a lot to read and it's all written with intelligence and some wit (on Clockhammer: "the middle break is the kind of art noise that makes me wanna stuff socks in my ear.")

FREE THOUGHT #4 \$2

% Eric Smith, 5219 Wyoming Rd, Bethesda MD 20816

One of the best looking new fanzines around, with excellent photos, layouts and printing. This is their best issue yet, with a varied menu of features - a piece about witchcraft, another about the coming draft, band interviews, and reviews. Excellent.

**FRONTSIDE #6 \$2**

2214 Lake Forest, San Bernardino CA 92407

Computer-scanned photos make this visually intriguing, although they usually don't look as good as screened pix. Straightedge bands and skateboard photos make up most of this, with some zine ads and reviews.

GOTHIC #2, #3 \$1

% Larry Chessler, 6 Crossbrook Ln, W Caldwell NJ 07006

Gothic is a continuing comic strip full of punk rock characters. The style is heavily influenced by Japanese comix and the stories tend to be non-linear (or maybe I just can't follow them) but involve various punk rock misadventures and lots of funny haircuts.

GRINCH ZINE #2 \$1.50

2 Knox Terrace, Totowa NJ 07512

A big fat half-size zine with lots of interviews and reviews, most of them with national bands (Cringer, Bad Religion, Lemonheads, Hard Ons) done thru the mail. The layouts show a lot of imagination, a really good bargain for the price.

INWARD MONITOR FANZINE #4 \$1.50

% Jon Reed, 293 7th Ave #3, Brooklyn NY 11215

The last issue from the wacky Jon Reed, ABC No Rio regular and cross-dressing ex-lead singer of Animal Crackers. This ish has more about the ABC No Rio "Geek Core" scene, an interview with Anthony Emo about his days in GO!, a Citizens Arrest interview, and some cool photos.

INWARD MONITOR VIDEO FANZINE #1 \$20

same address

Here's volume one of Jon's video adventures. Most of this features short films (Jon is apparently an aspiring filmmaker), most of them with some sort of splatter movie theme. Lots of blood and guts and adolescent horror movie shenanigans, plus a few short live-band clips. Some of it is funny (especially if you hang out at ABC No Rio and recognize all the regulars that Jon uses for his actors) but a lot of it is dumb and there are too many splatter episodes that don't do anything but rework the same cliches over and over again.

IT'S ALIVE #8 \$2

% Fred Hammer, 900 Azalea St, Oxnard CA 93030

Fred apparently couldn't nail Henry Rollins for an interview, so he "interviews" him by reprinting excerpted quotes from lots of other zine interviews -- not a bad idea. That's half the zine, the other half is devoted to No For An Answer and specifically an interview with Dan O'Mahoney. Good layouts.

KNUCKLE SANDWICH #1 Two stamps

% Matt Shawkey, 2106 Stirrup Ln, Alexandria VA 22308

It looks awful but it reads great -- funny, irreverent, original. Like, "I frequently find myself drooling at the mere thought of my latest vinyl treasure chest, but when Mark Jenkins starts talking about Fugazi in terms usually reserved for describing a sexual encounter with Jesus Christ, I feel the urge to forcibly set him, Guy, Brendan, Joe and Ian in a room with nothing but a couple of jugs, a washboard, a triangle and the sheet music to "The Dukes Of Hazzard" theme song until they submit that, just maybe, they aren't that deep." And so on. If Matt could just make it all a little easier to read...

KOAN #2 \$2

PO Box 18278, Washington DC 20036

A handsomely printed zine with an emphasis on the darker side -- the obscure Boro Orgy gets interviewed, there's pasteup art on the topics of Batman and rape, and the reviews tend to be short essays that go way beyond the usual "I like it or I don't".

LOOK AGAIN #3 \$2

PO Box 1090, Hudson NH 03051

A good-looking punkzine on heavy stock that covers everything from NY/HC (Neurosis and Bad Trip) to heavier metalcore bands like Wrecking Crew and Biohazard, plus reviews and a good concert section with lots of photos.

MARCHING FOR TRASH #2 75 cents + a stamp

20-21 Utopia Parkway, Whitestone NY 11357

Rich Trash, renowned bon vivant and raconteur of the ABC No Rio geekcore scene, gets a little more serious with his second issue, presenting interviews (mostly with his friends from ABC No Rio) and commentary (like how he's discriminated against because of his weight). An interesting mix of the silly and serious; for instance, Anthony Emo's "Go Tour Diary" gives quite a different picture of "Mike Bullshit's band" from what you've read in other zines. Imaginative layouts too.

MOUTH MAGAZINE #13 (65 cent stamp)

PO Box 2069, Decatur GA 30030

Either a very professional fanzine or an incredibly hand-to-mouth magazine; whatever, it calls itself "The South's Only Rock Zine" and seems to feature whatever bands are crawling through Atlanta that month... This ish has Killing Joke, Lunachicks, and locals Needle and King-Kill/33. The writing and layout put Spin to shame. Something to check out, even if you don't plan to visit the South.

MUSTARD GAS #2 2 stamps

% Greg King, 8680 The Fifth Green, Atlanta GA 30350

One of those zines put out by a young'un with more enthusiasm than finesse, so it's raw and messy and simple and a little trite -- just like a lot of my favorite records. Two things are certain -- it'll improve, and youth must be served. Rock on.

OUTBACK #5 #6 \$2

5255 Crane Rd, W. Melbourne FL 32904

Some of #5 seemed a bit dated - there's a 7 Seconds interview that must be a year old (and an Underdog photo that has to be even older) - but issue #6 followed soon after and it's a major improvement -- better layouts, better printing (although someone should tell these guys you can't just xerox photos without screening them first) and current interviews with Intent, Drawback, Bazooka Joe, Shelter, and more.

PATCHWORK ZINE #1 \$2

% Eric Duenas, 4323 Normal Ave #15, Los Angeles CA 90029

A pretty good first issue, with some band interviews, lots of photos, some politics, and lots of zine ads. Interestingly, the well-known and long-established Verbal Assault gets a cursory one-page mail interview while the unknown local band Profound gets the indepth q&a treatment here.

THE PAUL EMIL EXPERIENCE #1 \$1.50

% Paul, 33 Jefferson Ave, Kearny NJ 07032

Another member of the dreaded Kearny Punk Rock Mafia surfaces with his own fanzine. There are reviews of everything from shows and records to WFMU's schedule, newspaper reprints, a piece about an Indian massacre, and all sorts of stuff. Worth checking out.

PUNK COMIX #2 \$1 + stamp

% John Hill, W163 N11525 Windsor Ct, Germantown WI 53022

John Hill used to call himself No.4 and his artwork festoons everything from ads in Maximum Rock n Roll to album jackets and fanzines. This is a collection of his cartoons, which remind me of the old head comix like Zap and Mr. Backwards from the 70's. Keep on truckin'.

ROGUE ZINE #3 \$2

% Glenn Roberts, 12001 97th Ave N, Seminole FL 34642

This has the biggest print you'll find in any fanzine, although there's also a small-print reprint of an article on the Iraq war. Bands include Hogan's Heroes, Jawbreaker, Capitol Punishment and lots of photos.

SAD

% Bruce, 1832 Mayall Ct, San Jose CA 95132

No issue number, no price, try sending a few stamps and tell Bruce you're a skater. This is one of those Zen Skateboard zines, a combination of arty skate pix and stream-of-consciousness text. I like it.

SATAN ON A STICK #2 (No price given, try \$1)

PO Box 6387, Annapolis MD 21401-0387

Lots of poetry here, but also some an interview with Henry Rollins and a great feature where a bunch of the editors get together and talk trash about recent records - sort of review-by-committee. Published by one of the guys from the band Freakbeans, I believe.

SKATERS AGAINST DISCO #1 (? try \$1)

% Bruce, 1832 Mayall Ct, San Jose CA 95132

Well, I love the title anyway. A minizine dedicated to skateboarding, obviously. Lots of photos surrounded by short think pieces that touch on all sort of subjects. Reminds me a bit of Canada's Robzine.

SOUNDVIEWS #3 ?

96 Henry St #5W, Brooklyn NY 11201

This doesn't mention a price anywhere but a buck should do it. This is a newsprint zine like ours although somewhat smaller (#3 is 24 pages) with a very professional approach, altho the enthusiasm (and writing styles) are all fanzine. There's an interview with Hoboken folksinger Kate Jacobs and a piece on funk bands, sections devoted to performance art and poetry, and some reviews. It'll be interesting to watch where this goes.

SPILED GUTS #6 50 cents

% Chris Wagner, 12 White Oak Way, Trenton NJ 08618

Only six pages, all record and zine reviews, so it's more like a newsletter this time out, but a good way to check out what Chris has been listening to.

STRAIGHT OUT #8 \$2

7103 Oakwood Glen #15, Spring TX 77379

One original feature of this zine is a forum where vegetarians from

the hardcore scene talk about their veggie beliefs and diet. There's also yet another in-depth chat with Shelter on hare krishna's role in the hc scene plus some well-written columns and reviews.

STRANJER #12 \$1

% Erik Szantai, 15 Van Saun Dr, Trenton NJ 08628

Erik's last issue, alas, with the Derelicts, Circle Jerks, reviews, photos, plus farewell comments from all the regulars. It'll be missed.

SUBURBAN VOICE #30 \$2.50

PO Box 1605, Lynn MA 01903

Lots of cool bands in this long-running punkzine, this time including Thee Hypnotics, Leeway, Living Color and Handsome Dick Manitoba. Plus a great 7" featuring American Standard and Crucial Youth. You can't beat the bang for the buck you get from Suburban Voice.

TRACTION #2 \$2

PO Box 71033, Milwaukee WI 53211

An impressive effort from America's heartland that includes everything from a band talking about tattoos to Slug N Lettuce zine's Chris Boarts, a diatribe on homo superiority and a piece on censorship in the Milwaukee theater scene. Towards the back of the zine it turns into a more normal punkzine with band interviews and reviews. With everything else about this zine so well done, the photo reproduction could use a little improvement but otherwise this gets an A+.

UNDER THE VOLCANO #1 Two stamps

PO Box 26, Neconset, NY 11767

An ambitious first issue, 16 pages on newsprint. The Sick Of It All interview fawns over the band and lets them off the hook on a fairly important topic - why don't NY/HC bands like this play NY anymore? SOIA says "too bad there aren't anymore matinees," typically overlooking the fact that there's a matinee at ABC No Rio ever Saturday.... The reviews include some really offbeat bands and there's a funny advice column, some poetry, classifieds, and some comics. An excellent debut and I hope they keep it coming.

UNDERWORLD #3 2 or 3 stamps

% Robert Sing, PO Box 13934, Savannah GA 31416

Most of this half-size zine is reprints from other sources (newspapers and presskits), plus a few reviews and a weird short short story. You can get this in two versions, the regular linear one and one in which the pages are all scrambled. Choose one if you write for it.

WEIRD FLOWER #1 and 2, \$1

10 Gore St, Toronto Ont. Canada M6J 2C6

An offbeat zine that runs the gamut from zine, record, and show reviews to newspaper reprints to short stories and poetry of a macabre nature. Bands are interviewed with a standard one-sheet questionnaire.

CASSETTE CULTURE

PRIVATE PLAIN: "Godwatching" (PO Box 3173, Albany NY 12203)

5 song demo (with the songs on both sides of the tape -- I wish everyone would do that!). Some pretty long numbers here -- "Garfield" runs 5:16, "Godwatching" 5:08. That don't hurt it a bit. Best description I can come up with is psychedelic pop, sort of weaves webs around your head.

ROTT'S REVENGE: "Back To The Basics" (Rott Morbid, 7200 Franklin Ave #111, Hollywood CA 90046)

Rott is an Angry Young Man who decided to try and destroy people's minds through their ears. 11 songs on one side of a 60 minute tape. Death Punk.

SUBSTITUTION CASSETTE ZINE #1 (Sam Pederson, 28332 P.V.D.E, R.P.V. CA 90274)

This is a package deal. It comes in a freezer bag with a sticker, a punk zine (intvw with Distorted Pony, Sonic Youth, Stereotoxic Device, reviews, editorial stuff and a - surprise! - White Boy booklet), and also includes a 4 song tape from four of the bands interviewed. Fourwaycross appealed the most. Mainly industrial/experimental stuff.

THE VIOLETS: Demo (% Nelda Roberts, 225 King Ave, Athens GA 30606)

4 song demo. One of those damned things with the music only on one side. This one is pretty good. Sort of grungy pop, if that makes any sense. Thoughtful, well written songs, quite well done. I hope they put out a full length release, or ten.

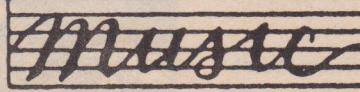
THE VOID: "Land Of The Free"/"Roadside" (PO Box 71, Medford MA 02153)

A song of life and freedoms done in just over 3 minutes. "Roadside" is a song of dreams running over 8 minutes with a lot of guitar interludes and sequences. Bubble gum pop escaped to the garage.

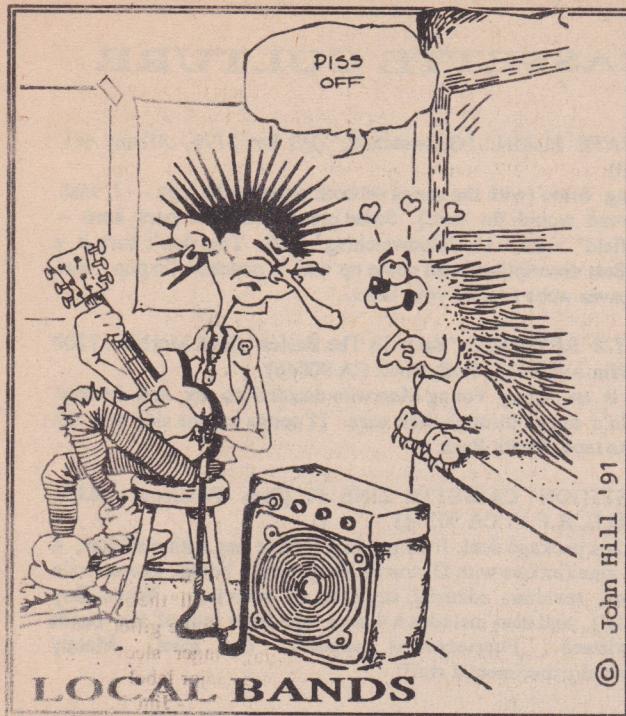
Well, children, that's it for this edition. It seems like a nice Spring day for change. Guess I'll go cut up some firewood, which hopefully I won't have to burn until next winter.

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LOCAL BANDS

ACIDENTAL POTATO CHIP, 7"

Vital Music

Imagine Harris Pankin of Letch Patrol on acid. Now imagine Harris on acid scratching a Madonna CD in a recording studio. Now imagine someone releasing that on a single. Now imagine why.

- Jim T.

ACCIDENTAL TRIBE

"Some Mojo Alien," 3 song EP

Noiseville, PO Box 124, Yonkers NY 10710

You can tell Accidental Tribe toil hard to create their grungoig scum rock sound, but hey, it's not how hard you work but how original you are. "Some Mojo Alien" "rocks" in a typical Seattle hair-wag way, but the gravel-fuzz guitar and lack of "rock star" attitude saves it from Sub-Poppian excess. "Squid Juice" hits a Pussy Galore inspired bluesy power-plod. Accidental Tribe have a lot of potential, let's see where they go next.

- Terry T.

ALICE DONUT

"Get A Life," 7"

Vital Music

Cool packaging and nice wax but this seems to be a pretty mediocre release from Alice Donut. Despite their twisted, heavy, groundbreaking previous releases and live shows, "Get A Life" just doesn't seem to cut it. And the flipside, "Get A Job," is atrocious. I'll pass on this one.

- John L.

ALICE DONUT/DA WILLYS

"Alice Donut Does Da Willys" 7-inch

Rave, PO Box 40075, Philadelphia PA 19106

Another one of those split singles, like the Sonic Youth/Mudhoney thing. This time, Alice Donut does Da Willys' "Love Rollercoaster" and Da Willys cover Donut's "Egg." Donut wins hands down, not only because they're the better band but because, in this case, they've got the better song - a playful bloozy romp whose goofy lyrics perfectly suit Tom Antonia's caterwaul vocals. Da Willys have to press to get anything out of

Donut's quirky "Egg;" something a little looser and more Dollish like "New Jersey Exit" might have suited them better. Still, a cool single with a suitably garish pic sleeve.

- Jim T.

ALL FALL DOWN

4-song EP

Footlong

All Fall Down's sound might best be described as Lite Core, with Keith Allen's emo vocals dancing over a mix of trebley guitars and poppy bass. The four songs here have an uplifting, 7 Seconds quality, although they're not as mushy as that makes them sound. And if you like this EP, too bad; the band's since changed personnel and sounds completely different nowadays, a lot harder and heavier.

- Jim T.

ANGEL ROT

"Screw Drive"/"Monkey Rape" 45

239 S. 4th St #1, Brooklyn NY 11211

Misfits meet Helmet, recorded on a boombox in CBGB's men's room. Just to show you how punk they are, this is on Fuck Records.

- Jim T.



ALL FALL DOWN

Photo by Jim Testa

AZALIA SNAIL

Snailbait, lp

Albertine, PO Box 154, Vauxhall NJ 07088

Imagine Patti Smith in a tie dyed shirt eating granola. Trippy acoustic folk with a poetic female vocal presence. Some pretty moments but it's a bit too hippie for me.

- Jim T.

BIOHAZARD

Biohazard, lp

Maze Intl, 96 So. Long Beach Rd, Rockville Ctr, NY 11570

Hard, vengeful Noo Yawk short-haired metal from this quartet. Biohazard toured Europe with Mucky Pup last year. Their sound hearkens back to the '88 CBGB noise/metal folk like Prong and Cro Mags.

- Johnny P.

BLISTERS/NUDE SWIRL

"Taking All Bets" 7-inch EP

Pintonium AG c/o PO Box 166, Green Village NJ 07935

Two cool NJ bands on a German 7", which luckily ex-Blister Bill Kleemeyer is selling via mail-order here. The Blisters tunes include "Girls From Hell," one of Nitti's best Joey Ramone vocals, while Nude Swirl gives us "Fuck Sharp" from their lp and another similarly grungy Sub-Poppish noise bomb. Play very loud.

- Jim T.

CARNIVAL OF SHAME

Go Tell Mother, EP

Burnin' Records

This is above-average hard rock with some catchy riffs. This Philly quintet reminds me of the recent Ramones stuff, like Brain Drain. All in all, a good release.

- Jamie T.

JOE CHRIST

"Bigger Than God" 7"

Vital Music

With sidemen like Chris Spedding and Letch Patrol's Chicken John, filmmaker Joe Christ's venture into punkdom already had a headstart. Basically both sides of this 45 feature a booming reverb rockabilly sound -- anybody remember Gene Pitney? -- with grungy lyrics about guns and love and shit.

- Jim T.

CITIZENS ARREST

Colossus, lp

Wardance/Vermiform, PO Box 1145, NY NY 10276

NYC's Citizens Arrest go out with a bang with this impressive lp. Still, the strengths here -- the intelligence and wit of the lyrics, the varied and innovative guitar parts in the introductions and bridges to songs -- are undercut by the nature of the band's chosen genre, grindcore. No matter how interesting a song starts out, once you get to the vocals it's 1-2-3-4 into Daryl Kahan's growling warpspeed vocals and any subtlety or nuance is lost in the rapidfire spew that follows. Nobody (except maybe Born Against) played ABC No Rio with more power, precision and dedication than C.A. but I'd like to think all the members could move onto projects whose music did justice to all their talents, not just their ability to play fast. As always with the gifted Do It Yourselves at Vermiform, the packaging, inner sleeve, and poster insert here surpass the quality of most major label product.

- Jim T.

CRAWLPAPPY

"Temple Body"/"Mind's Eye" 45

Blackout

Pounding Lower East Side grungemetal, the only difference being that one side's a little faster than the other. Brian Childers does his usual Caveman From Avenue A vocal thing and the



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rhythm section sounds like somebody tearing up your driveway.
Ouch.

- Jim T.

JUDY DUNAWAY

Judy Dunaway, CD
Lost, 346 E 13 St #7, New York NY 10003

Deadpan downtown jazz/folk, with that sort of arty, dry sense of humor that isn't meant to provoke laughs, just a sort of "my, isn't that clever?" It doesn't really matter since Dunaway's voice grates on me. But I really find this whole chi chi style of art-rock too precious and self-congratulatory to stomach anyway.

- Jim T.

ED GEIN'S CAR

"Naked Man" 7"

Vital Music

Don't miss out on this one, folks. Two enthralling blasts of primal distorted 50's/60's punk from the legends. "Consider Being True" is a way hot pogo tune while "Naked Man" stays on as the more powerful, slower tune here. Mandatory, especially for those who missed the boat years ago like I did and never enjoyed them while they were around. Radical pink vinyl.

- John L.

THE FIENDZ

"Dead End" EP
Headtrip Records, 609 N. Belmont Ave, Los Angeles CA 90025

New Jersey punk rock must be really coming into its own if L.A. fanzines are releasing our local bands on their labels. But here's Headtrip zinc putting out three cool new Fiendz tunes, two of them instantly recognizable pop-punk and the third a slow, almost Phil Spectorish ballad written by drummer Joe Darone. Nice pic sleeve and a great lyric insert with amazing cartoon work by artist Tim Gasp.

- Jim T.

FLAG OF DEMOCRACY

Down With People, LP
Rave, Box 40075, Philadelphia PA 19106

Last time I heard from these guys, they were on Buy Our Records with their amazing debut album, Shatter Your Day, which someone described as having vocals like a cross between HR and Jello Biafra. The scariest part was that it was true. Now with Down With People, their third album, they still hold true to their roots. It's not as manic thrash-paced as their debut but good all the same. There are more traces of catchy melodies on this one and the singer has gone into a more nasally/annoying direction, and gives himself a chance to catch his breath. Noise, melody, crunch, jam outs, jelly ins, and some other bits and pieces are mangled into FOD's newest slab. You what what to do. (Should've been a lyric sheet with this though!).

- Tom A.

FLATUS

"Walk My Way" 3 song EP
% Ted Shiko, 15 Lawrence St, Hamburg NJ 07419

Pretty cool three-piece popcore which reminds me a lot of the Fiendz. Same driving Ramonesy backbeat, three chord simplicity and totally catchy tunes. Catch 'em.

- Jim T.

MICK HARGRAVE

"Legendary Wild Kingdom" 7"
Headflies, PO Box 5156, Hoboken NJ 07030

The bassist of Hoboken's Tonebenders goes solo here, with a heavy dancebeat and a fun tune about wild animals real and fictional. It's deejay city as crazy samples, "live" background noises and girl-group backup vocals fill up the mix. The B side is crooning rockabilly shmaltz a lot more like the Tonebenders' usual pop sound.

- Jim T.



GUTWRENCH

"New Block On The Kids" 4 song EP

Tragic Life, PO Box 060623, Staten Island NY 10306

Gutwrench play ultra-catchy popcore, but don't let those dewy vocals fool you. Underneath the kids next door exterior are slobbering cretins who make G.G. Allin look like an altar boy. Even Ben Weasel once remarked that the lyrics to "She Hates My Guts" show an unequaled genius for misogyny ("Maybe it's all becoz/I fed Drano to her cat/But she offed my mom & dog/I thought we were even cuz of that"). Seriously, though, if you're into that catchy All/Descendents thing with a bottom-heavy Marshall stacks guitar crunch, this will rock you. (Consumer alert: Gutwrench guitarist John Lisa writes for Jersey Beat; but I'd like this band anyway. Honest.)

- Jim T.

HEADS UP

Duke, EP

Emergo

After the rocking start of this record, I knew I wouldn't be disappointed by it. It blasts off with some funky, hard rockin' grooves that would make Jane's Addiction proud. Heads Up don't limit themselves to just having a good time and playing funky rock, though. They lurch off into some borderline post-punk dissonance at times in the slower offerings, while still retaining that oh-so-good funk I just spoke of.

It's obvious that Head's Up is a talented band and they prove it throughout this 5 song EP.

- Jamie T.

HYPNOLOVEWHEEL

Space Mountain, lp

Alias

Despite the fact that my editor has become infamous around the Alias Records offices for his intense dislike of this band, my first impression of this lp was "I like them." Semi-catchy pop w/

occasionally fuzzy guitars done by a bunch of nerdy college types. Nothing that exciting, but decent enough. Point taken: I saw these guys at Maxwells and the show had 10 times the energy the album did. It's as if they were two different bands. Wonder why? Minus a few bad dumb jokes, they were ok. Now, Jim, why do you hate them?

- Tom B.

ISM

The Hits That Missed (1982-1989), CD

(No address on sleeve)

This New York band's greatest "hits" package is such a varied collection of musical styles that I can't really generalize enough to say how it all sounds. It ranges from funny-punk, hardcore, noise-hardcore, and maybe common rock 'n roll (the more recent stuff). This is overall an entertaining release, but as might be expected with an eight-year discography, there are high and (numerous) low points.

- Jamie T.

KIARO SCURO

Debut, lp

Well Primed, PO Box 351, New Brunswick NJ 08903

Some high school kids get together and form a band and a new record label. Sary Lyons' vocal abilities carry this 6-song EP as she centers on emotions that cause pain but strives to obtain something real. KS is only 10 months old but must be making one hell of an effort to produce this fine piece of lite music w/ a heavy undertow.

- Tom B.

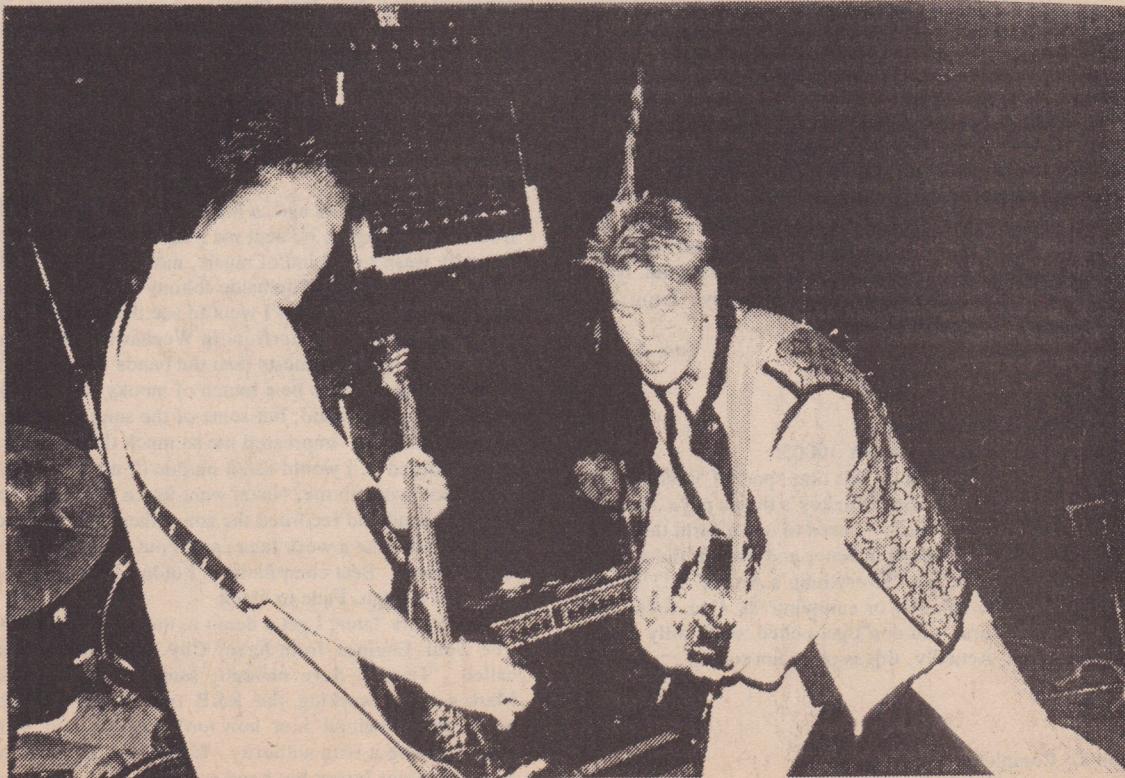
LUCKY 7

Feed The Snake, lp

Buy Our

Polka, Cajun, Elvis and the Pogues are all mixed into this so-so package. The novel approach this band takes is fun, but as the record plays on, I lose interest. Maybe it takes a taste for this sort of roots music to appreciate it.

- Jamie T.



TWELVE : 01

Photo by Jim Testa

MARCEL MONROE

Framed, CD

Certain, 234 5th Ave #301, NYC 10001

It can't exactly be a compliment for me to say the best song on this record is a cover, but it's true. Marcel Monroe tries hard, with a great female lead singer, but she doesn't use her fine voice to her full potential. And while the band plays together well, the songs are so boring and unoriginal that while they might be fun to play, they aren't much fun to listen to. I hate to be this hard on a band, Marcel Monroe certainly have talent, but the songs here are all too overdone and that limits the direction they could have gone on this album. Better luck next time.

- Jamie T.

PARASITES

"Last Caress"/"Fool For You" 7"

Shredder

Love punk -- they have a sound not unlike their New Jerseyan mates The Fiendz. On this swirled orange vinyl, there are two tune - the Misfits' "Last Caress" and "Fool For You" -- melodic lovey dovey punk, but rockin'. "Fool For You" was done by Nikke Parasites (all by his self, recorded in his basement).

This be something to send to your punk rock girlfriend. And check out all the skulls on the cover! Oooooooh.

Hey, it ain't all that bad. Check it out.

- Erik Szantai

PARASITES/MOURNING NOISE

"Live Nightmares" 7-inch EP

Radcor/Forefront Records, 280 Fairmount Ave, Chatham NJ 07928

Pat Duncan's probably had a couple thousand bands play live on his WFMU radio show over the past ten years and it looks like - shades of John Peel - some of those sessions will be coming out on vinyl. So here's the Parasites from February 1990 and the Misfits-worshipping Mourning Noise from 1982. Great sound quality and a nice pic sleeve, and the music's not bad either, especially the three zingy, Ramonesish Parasites tunes.

- Jim T.

RADICTS

"Cruel Times"/"Rich And The Dirty," 7"

Polemic, Box 1516, Moses Lake WA 98837

Finally! The Radicts do justice to their live show with a great single. Catchy, powerful punk with a punch. Like their split record, their influences are obviously from punk rock's past, but they're so well executed that the band never sounds stale or redundant. Cool guitars, a lively rhythm section, and good lyrics (but no lyric sheet) round this package off nicely. Long live Vaseline and Ace unbreakable combs!

- Tom A.

SEA MONKEYS

"Sea Monkey Theme Song" 7-inch

Vital, 81 Second Ave, New York NY 10003

Scum rockers go bubblegum on this one ; part of Vital Music's Swinging Singles Club. The Sea Monkey's theme pays homage to those biological marvels that you used to order form the back of comic books ("just put them in water and watch them come alive!") while the flipside has "Everything's Archie" (!??!) and another original. Not as noisy or annoying as I've found the band live, and of course you don't get pelted with Silly String just listening to this. Actually, this is okay fun rock.

- Jim T.

SIC KIDZ

No Reason To Complain, LP

Apex/Skyclad

The Sic Kidz started out as a practical joke (according to Mick

Cancer's humorous liner notes) and lasted five years, at one time including Ben Vaughn (who played drums under the name Sal Mineo's Only Son). This album chronicles their existence, from rough early live tracks to studio cuts from compilations, EP's and unreleased demos. If you never heard of the Sic Kidz, you wouldn't be alone; they were one of many Cramps cloned psychobilly bands who stomped out simple three-chord boogie punk, heavy on the theatrical stage presence. If you were a part of their "small but fanatical audience" and want a momento, here it is. Otherwise, I'd pass.

- Jim T.

SPEED THE PLOUGH

Wonder Wheel, CD

East Side Digital

Speed The Plough's second release washes over you like a cool soothing breeze on a hot arid night. If I'm waxing poetic here, forgive me, but it's catching. There's something about John Baumgartner's pastoral compositions, a pixelike combination of traditional folk melodies and instrumentation (flute, woodwinds, piano, organ, even accordion) and prog-rock time signatures and chord changes. Toni Paruta's breathy vocals add to the air of enchantment, and the production (by Feelie Bill Million) sparkles, capturing each instrument with the clarity of hearing the music played in Carnegie Hall. A great record for a sticky summer night, just mix up a pitcher of lemonade and break out the earphones.

- Jim T.

SPRINGHOUSE

Landfalls, CD

Caroline

The follow up to their SOL "Menagerie Keeper" 45 stays in the same alternative pop vein. Lush guitar sound with lyrics that are subtle yet convey a heartfelt message via memorable tunes. I appreciate the fact that there's no overpowering "this is us" stance here. The listener is allowed to do his own deciphering of what is intelligently projected into the atmosphere.

- Tom B.

SOUL ENGINES

Ghosts On A Landscape, CD/cassette

SPYS

About five years ago, a high school kid named Mark Nuzzi from North Bergen, NJ sent me a tape by his band, The Motive. It really wasn't my kind of music, more like Asbury Park r&b in an early Springsteen/Southside Johnny style, but the songwriting really impressed me. So I went to see the band at Gennaro's, a real dump along the waterfront in Weehawken that's more famous for its wet t shirt contests than the bands that play there. The Motive turned out to be a bunch of mooksy looking Italian kids from the neighborhood, but some of the songs really cooked; one of 'em, "Trust," impressed me so much that I told Mark if he ever recorded it, I would use it on one of my compilations.

Unbeknownst to me, Nuzzi went into a cheap local studio that very weekend and recorded the song; there was a cassette of it in the mail for a me a week later, and I put it on the "For Your Ears Only" Jersey Beat compilation. I didn't hear much from Mark after that though. Fade to black.

Five years later, I get a demo in the mail from a band called The Soul Engines from Jersey City. And there's a song on it called "Trust." Sure enough, same song, same songwriter. Mark's still working the R&B turf (and has Asbury Park management behind him now too), and can still write a mean song and sing it with authority. If you like that punchy juke joint Saturday night Jersey bar band rock and roll, check 'em out.

- Jim T.

KEITH SPARBANIE AND THE SOFT PARADE

29, CD

Sparbanie, PO Box 268, W.Alexandria PA 15376

Self-produced, self-arranged, and self-aggrandizing, this CD represents the sort of cheezy South Jersey bar-rock that I hoped had gone out of style back around the time Mr. Springsteen started playing football stadiums. Just the thing for your next frat mixer. Pass the beer nuts.

- Jim T.

TWELVE:01

"Hero"/"Track Of Time" 7-inch

Singles Only Label

A young trio from Ewing (which is down near Trenton) on Steve Fallon's SOL label proves that today's kids do listen to the records we old farts liked back in the good old days (like, 1981). The jangling, bouncy acoustic guitars on this remind me of both the Feelies and early, early Bongos, and even if the songwriting isn't quite that landmark, these kids do okay by themselves. Both songs are kind of romantic and naive, and the B-side tune's catchy bass line and rhythm guitar chords would've fit right into the power-pop scene back in the days of the Speedies (alright, everybody: "WHO?"). Take my word for it, this has a nice jangle to it and has whet my appetite to see a whole set of this stuff soon.

- Jim T.

VACANT LOT

"She Gotta Leave"/"All Kindsa Girls" 45

Baylor, 48 Monitor St, Brooklyn NY 11222

Probably the best garage band in New York City right now, the Vacant Lot make their vinyl debut with a killer 7". Side A is one of their power-packed originals, with mind-bending melody

and a great beat. The B Side is one reason why I luv this band (they like all the same old punk records that I do) as they cover the Real Kids' classic "All Kindsa Girls," speeding it up and giving it a 90's overhaul. Catch this combo live or you're nowhere, Jack.

- Jim T.

WOODEN SOLDIERS

Roses Of Steel, lp

Well-Primed, Box 351, New Brunswick NJ 08903

The Wooden Soldiers get an A for effort and an E for Earnest, but their penchant for sophomore lit class-level poetry and knee-jerk liberal cliches won't earn them more than a D this semester. There's nothing wrong with trying to re-invigorate the idea of a folk-rock band circa the Early 60's coffeehouse days, but maybe these guys could use a little remedial reading in Phil Ochs and Bob Dylan so they'd stop writing lyrics like "You lose to win but where ya been, 'cause the losers are the winners of today." Yeah, and I am a rock, I am an island.

- Jim T.

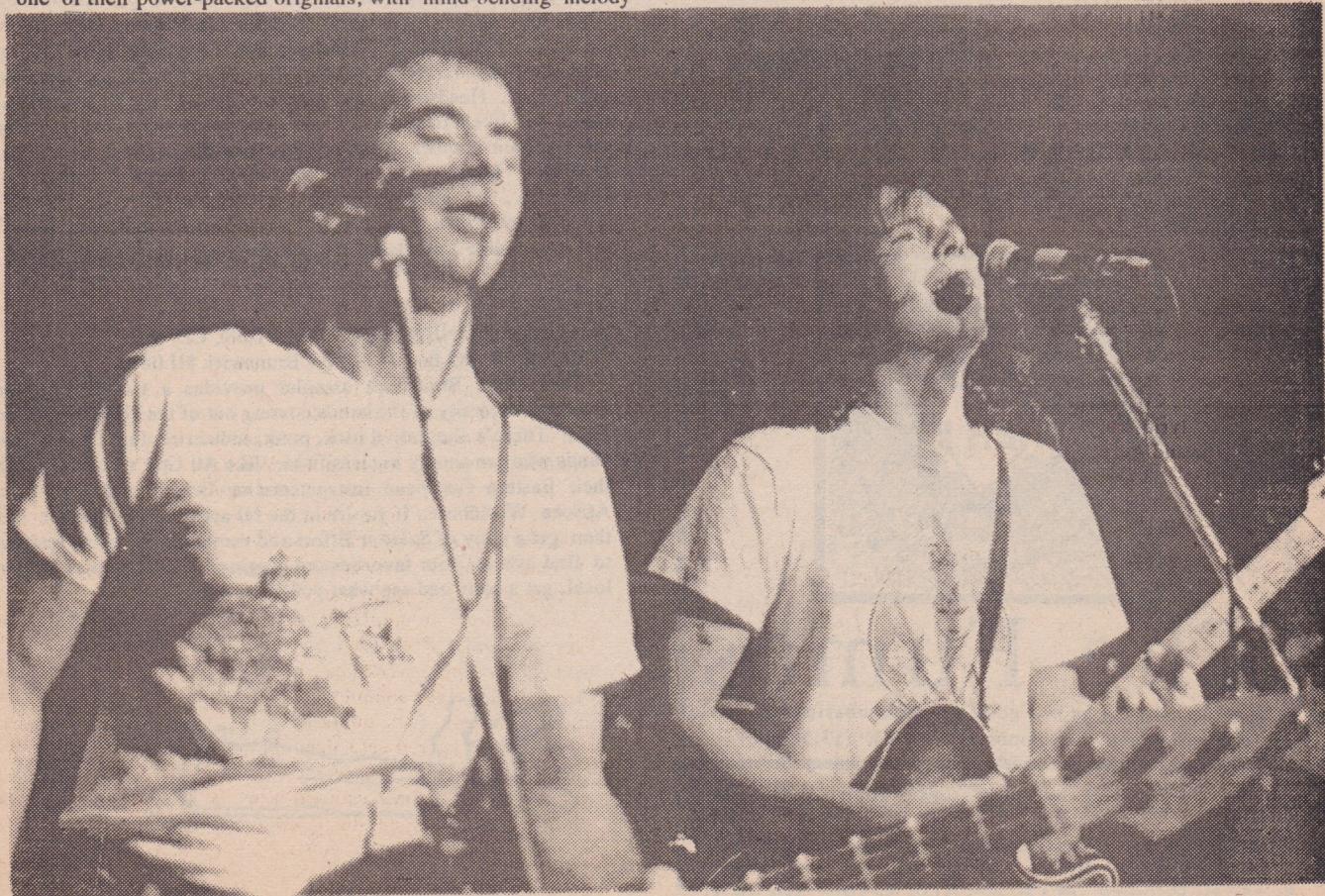
THE WRETCHED ONES

"America's Most Wanted" EP

Headache, 53 Myrtle Ave, Midland Park NJ 07432

You can always count on the Wretched Ones for some catchy punk rock with a sawtooth edge. Here they do four tunes all on the theme of crime in America, from a harangue against white collar criminals ("Legal Violation") to a plea for capital punishment ("Life For A Life") to a salute to their favorite true crime tv show ("America's Most Wanted"). With tongue firmly in cheek, they probably don't believe any of it. Cool picture sleeve, lyric insert, and the record comes on yucky splattered vinyl.

- Jim T.



VACANT LOT

WORKDOGS

"Haunted House Of Love" 7"

Vital

Jad Fair associates The Workdogs have been around for years, playing demon to drunken blues; you can tell they're acutely aware of the fact that they ain't no old, blind, poverty-stricken black men from the South. They really aren't jive-ass honky imitators. The Workdogs twist up and distort the blues form to suite their experience. There are two versions of "Haunted House Of Love" (the B side has guitar). At first you may not be able to appreciate the slow, minimal groove but after a couple of listens, you start to dig their strange burnt-out scummy white guy vision of the world.

- Terry T.

THE WRETCHED ONES

"Going Down To The Bar" EP

Dionysus

Two songs from the band's infamous 6" EP (yes, six inches) and a new tune, "Save My Place." Sloppy, energetic beercore from these old timers still gets me pogoing everytime I hear it.

- Jim T.

YOUTH GONE MAD/URGENT FURY

Split 7"

Piggybank

Youth Gone Mad do a note-for-note recreation of the Ramones' "Loudmouth," with female vocals instead of Joey's. If you've ever seen them live, it sorta makes sense. Urgent Fury, back after a long hiatus, revs up their intense NY/HC again with "Body Count," an angry anti-war song. Great double picture sleeve too.

- Jim T.

Motherload

4 Song 7" - Spokanes power pop punk with just a tad o' funk (\$3.50 ppd)



The Fumes

"Four punchy tracks in a good old back to basics punk style...this surely gets the thumbs up." - MRR (\$3.50 ppd)

Still Available Gruntruck -Inside Yours (LP/CD \$8/12) Includes members of Skin Yard, The Accused, and Final Warning..Skullcrushing Groove Rock.

Write for free catalogue that includes the Fartz, Accused, Derelicts, etc...

eMpTy Records PO Box 12034 Seattle, Wa 98102

BROOKLYN BEAT VOLUME 3, CD

PO Box 20270, New York NY 10001

This isn't the type of music I expected. This certainly isn't a hardcore compilation. The bland, 70's Elevator Pop of most of these bands leaves me kind of queasy. This compilation contains songs by five bands who are all out to sea in an eddyng pool of swill. I'm not even going to comment on the 11-minute-plus, self-indulgent Frank's Museum song.

- Jamie T.

HOUSE ARREST

A Puerto Rican Hardcore Compilation

% Jeff Coleman, 74 Osborne Ave, Norwalk CT 06855

When Jeff Spaz (of Seizure fame) recently visited Puerto Rico on vacation, he discovered a hardcore scene there that had gone virtually unnoticed. So he got five bands to give him some tracks and put them on this 7". Unfortunately the sound quality ranges from bad to awful, and the music's all thrash and speedmetal, but this is still an admirable project. Inner sleeve gives details and addresses for all the bands if you want to get in touch. Some sing in English and some in Spanish. Funny there aren't more Hispanic hardcore bands in NYC...

- Jim T.

SEARCH AND ANNOY VOLUME ONE - 7" compilation

with Blisters, Loose, Headstrong & Lucy Brown

Complex Records, 131 N.6th Ave, Highland Pk, NJ 08904

Sam Shiffman has always been the Ben Weasel of New Jersey, but lately, he's been a lot more visible, writing record reviews for the Splatter Effect and a column for Maximum Rock N Roll. Frequently acerbic, often petty, and downright nasty when he feels like it, Shiffman at least has the balls to put his money where his mouth is by bankrolling this compilation of four bands he likes. The Blisters' "Welcome Mat" (their first vinyl outing with new drummer Tony Spunk) is slower and prettier than their usual stuff. Headstrong, the only band here I haven't seen live, starts out like a punk band and breaks into a funky rap midway through their number, "Static." While hardly original these days, it works. Loose, the flannel-shirted boy wonders from New Brunswick, get all funky and soulful themselves with "Truth," while Lucy Brown rages through a live version of "Color Blind" that sounds like Jimi Hendrix Meets Soundgarden. This rocks.

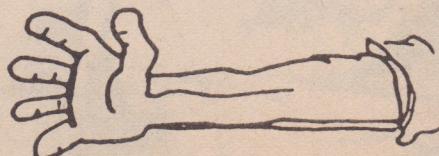
- Jim T.

THE THORAZINE STRETCH FACTOR, CD

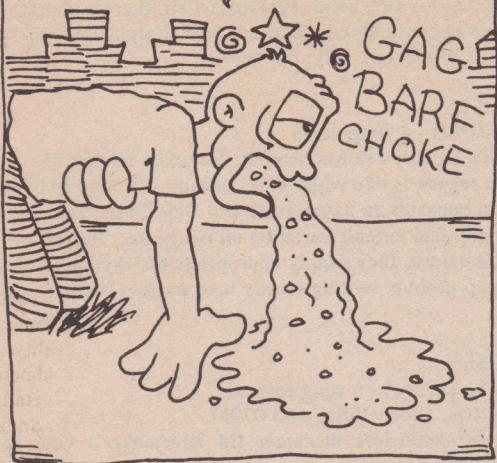
Well-Primed, PO Box 351, New Brunswick NJ 08903

This New Brunswick sampler provides a glimpse at the awesome diversity of the bands coming out of the Hub City these days. There's alternative rock, punk, industrial, funk, and a few bands who are simply unclassifiable, like All God's Children with their Eastern European instrumental or Green Lion Burning's African Worldbeat. If you're in the NJ area, check this out and then get a copy of Splatter Effect and rummage the club listings to find where your favorites are gigging. And if you're not a local, get a copy and see what you're missing.

- Jim T.



DEMOS



Randumb Thoughts © John Hill '91

BOUFFANT JELLYFISH

"Six Month Shelf Life," cassette

Betsy Nissen Mgmt, Box 164252, Austin TX 78716

A Texas funk/metal combo groomed by somebody to be the next Faith No More. So why aren't they signed yet? Maybe because we're all sick of Faith No More, even before their mega-popularity.

- Johnny P.

BRUTAL TRUTH

"Birth Of The Ignorance" - 4-song cassette

c/o Scott Lewis, 37-54 81 St #4B, Jackson Hts NY 11372

I have a real problem getting past the vocals in grindcore like this. No matter how fast the rest of the band is going (and it's usually VERY fast indeed) the vocals always sound as if they're playing at the wrong speed, way too slow. Either that or it sounds like somebody throwing up. Putting that aside, the music here has an unmistakable power, especially for a three-piece, full of power and fury. A good example of the genre if you're into it.

- Jim T.

"Out Of The Basement And Into The Bedroom" 9-song cassette

% Packy Thompson, 6 Florence Dr, Jamesburg NJ 08831

Pretty cool tape here, kicking off with a garagey punk cover of Neil Young's "After The Goldrush" and later on, a melancholy acoustic cover of the Ramones' "Bonzo Goes To Bitburg." The 7 originals rock too, especially the band's theme song, "...but ugly," which explains their name and their take on life. Simple power-chord punk rock with melodies, some clever hooks and a snotty attitude pretty much sums it up.

- Jim T.

FREAKBEANS

6-song cassette

c/o Satan On A Stick, Box 6387, Annapolis MD 21401-0387

When this band turned up at ABC No Rio in March, Freakbeans turned out to be one of those wonderful surprises, a band that comes along out of nowhere and totally blows everyone away. Live, two things stood out - singer Scott Carter's non-stop energy (he was a virtual blur, he kept thrashing his body around so much) and the slap bass funkosity of Tom Steer. On this

tape, there's far less funk than I remembered; instead, the music takes on a heavy rhythmic element that's very D.C. influenced, a cross between Soulside and Fugazi, with the piercing guitar overriding the bass, all of it riding along on top of a heavy bottom of drums. The lyrics have a Fugazi-like social conscience as well - well-painted pictures that depict the horrors of rape, drug abuse, environmental waste, with enough poetic license to escape the preachy tone of young straightedge bands. If Freakbeans come to your town this summer, see them.

- Jim T.

IMF

Strength, Speed & Beauty - 9 song cassette

1232 Meadow Dr, Algonquin IL 60102

IMF play a mixture of twangy comedycore and all-out raging hardcore that reminds me of both Screeching Weasel (who probably influenced these young 'uns when they entered the scene a few years ago) and the Angry Samoans. A solid rhythm section keeps things tight and the lyrics go for laughs more often than not. Probably a fun band to see live, although this doesn't sound like they've got enough really memorable songs to risk taking the plunge on their own lp yet.

- Jim T.



FREAK BEANS

THE JUICEMEN - 4 song demo

% Syd Novak,

The Juicemen, who hail from Westchester, play psychadelicized rock and roll with a thick stack o' Marshalls guitar sound. They've got a cool sense of humor, too; the second song on this tape is "Love Power," which you might remember Dick Shawn singing as the hippie-dippie flower child in Mel Brooks' classic flick, *The Producers* (the movie with "Springtime For Hitler"). Anyway, the Juicedudes do a great version of the song, and while their own compositions aren't as loony, they've got the same lysergic sensibility and find a nice rockin' groove, with strong, bluesy vocals. I wanna see these guys live soon.

- Jim

JULIA DREAM

They're sounding even better musically over their last demo, "Killin' Jive." Excursions into heartache, sorrow, and goodbyes are explored on "Goodbye Sweet Noon," and further areas of humanity get probed on "The Being." Julia Dream is growing up and sharing it w/ us, I just wish they'd do it with better quality sound recording.

(Sploob, PO Box 282, Manville NJ 08835)

- Tom B.

MATTER OF FACT

"The Hand" - 7 song cassette

c/o Bull Gervasi, 142 Frankford Ave, Blackwood NJ 08012

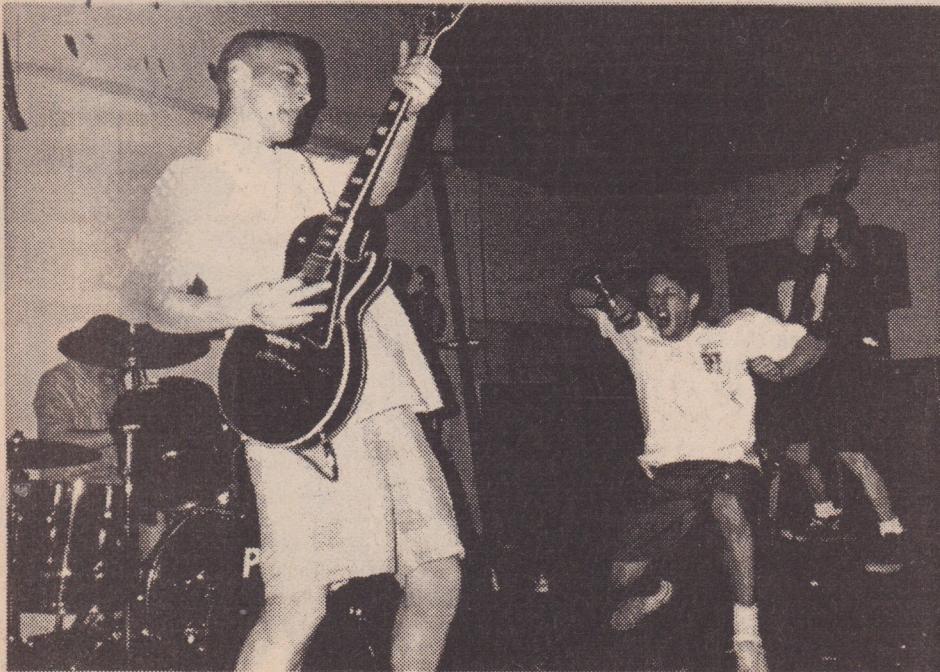
You gotta luv a band with a bass player named Bull. Anyway, Matter Of Fact have a heavily D.C.-influenced hardcore sound, with Jeff Fisher's extra-emo vocals the standout feature. The passion he pours into his singing provides the fuel that makes this tape ignite. Sounds like they'd be a killer live band too.

- Jim T.

MOTEL SHOOTOUT - 6 song demo

% Keith Hartel, 1724 Lincoln Hwy, Edison NJ 08817

This is the 2nd demo I've heard from Motel Shootout, a hot New Brunswick combo fronted by ex-A.O.D. Keith Hartel. Keith gave up a shot at a major label deal as bassist for The



MATTER OF FACT

Nymphs in L.A. so he could sing and play guitar in his own band, and the results may very well lead him back to a major label deal. Shootout's sound is mainstream rock, heavily flavored by Keith's Elvis Costello-influenced vocals. Unlike AOD or Keith's first band, Pleased Youth, there's nothing goofy or tongue in cheek about the songs, just straight-ahead rockers and ballads. Gary Gersh, call your service.

- Jim

OOLA BUSH - 4 song demo

Bound To Sound, 418 Madison St, Hoboken NJ 07030

White reggae is like white funk, usually it's done so badly that the term becomes an oxymoron. But Oola Bush keep a light and dancey pop feel to their variation on the genre. Instead of trying to be Jamaican, they simply appropriate the rhythms and find a happy pop groove, writing mostly love songs. Nice.

- Jim

SWINGSET

"Music In Theory" - 6 song cassette

PO Box 166, Green Village NJ 07935

This is ex-Blisters drummer Bil Kleemeyer's new band, a punky four-piece with a comic bent. With titles like "Takin' Dolly To The Meatmarket" and "Cookies, Candy, Vacuum Cleaners," we're not exactly talking Jello Biafra spoken word here; more like mid-tempo Adrenalin O.D. or old P.E.D. material, catchy pop-punk with thrash guitars and a solid backbeat.

- Jim

WALKING DISTANCE

"Sex Sells And You're Buying" - 7-song cassette

PO Box 375, Fairfield CT 06430

Scott Munroe has worn his heart on his sleeve for too long as the editor of Chairs Missing fanzine for his musical passions to be a secret. When he starts another band, anyone who's been a fan of his writing knows what to look for in his music. And that's what you get on this well-produced EP from his latest project, Walking Distance: Wire and Sonic Youth are the two crossed swords on this band's family crest, rampant on a field of Rickenbacker reverb. The dissonant, interconnecting guitar parts

and the terse arrangements are both minimalist and noisy at the same time, somehow. I'd call the lyrics "gothic," if I didn't respect Scott so much, with phrases about suicide and cyanide and despair and death emerging from the mix. It's moody but it rocks.

- Jim T.

WAX

"The Abortion From Hell" 6-song cassette

% Paul Meaney, 1525 E 26 St, Brooklyn NY 11229

These guys were made for ABC No Rio, they're geekcore all the way, from the goofy titles and lyrics ("Bowling For Vomit," "The Slurpee Song") to their tag-sale-from-hell wardrobes to their crucial cover of the Looney Tunes theme. Loud, nasty, and garagey punk rock.

- Jim T.

DIARY OF A ROCK CRITTER

a beginner's guide to clubland

by jim testa

SUPERCHUNK, CATHARSIS, ERECTUS MONOTONE - Court Tavern, New Brunswick - Thursday, February 7

Erectus Monotone are pals of Superchunks and had tagged along on the 'chunks' East Coast mini-tour but couldn't play any of their NYC dates. So I bused down to Brunfuss to check 'em out at the Court. Mostly they reminded me of Pavement -- disheveled collegiate mofo who played a spastic, disjointed scree punk that sounded like they were making it up as they went along. Kinda cool, kinda nerdy at the same time, but if they ever get "good" enough to be slick, it'll all fall apart. 90% of the charm is in their seeming ineptitude. Punk lives. Catharsis have been juking it up down in New Brunswick for a couple of years now and I half expected some stale guitar-band shit, but they kicked butt and totally impressed me with a loud, fierce post-psychadelic fuzz storm. Superchunk here, playing for a small crowd mid-week, seemed tired and not quite as rockin' as they did at the Knitting Factory the Saturday before. Still, they're one of the best trad-rock guitar combos around these days, and I'd pay 5 bucks just to hear Mac sing "Slack Motherfucker" anytime, even on a Thursday out of town.

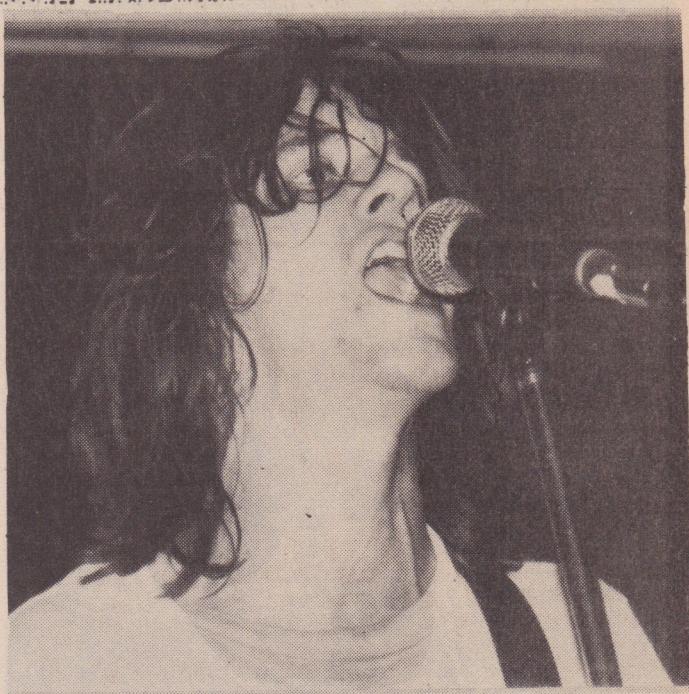
SOUTHEAST MUSIC CONFERENCE SHOWCASE, Ritz Theater, Ybor City FL - The idea was to get away for about 5 days and visit my friend Johnny Puke in Tampa, see a couple of shows, hit the pool and get a nice tan, and come back to NYC refreshed and revitalized. Yeah, right. So the worst cold spell in 5 years hits just as my plane hits the runway in Tampa and I spend my whole visit in long pants and sweaters. So much for that \$6 bottle of Coppertone.

I had picked this weekend because it coincided with the Southeast Music Conference, sort of a minor league New Music Seminar for the Gulf Coast. It turned out to be a disorganized, fourth-rate operation with chickenshit panels on "How To Make A Demo Tape" and "When Do I Need A Lawyer," and 90% of it was dopey mooks from the local glam bands staring at one another wondering where all the sharp New York A&R men they were promised were hiding. (Actually, nobody at any label, major or indie, that I talked to had even heard of this shindig, let alone attended.) The music end of it was several showcase performances at local theaters, featuring ten-band bills of local talent. Ten Florida bands are about 7 too many so we just checked out three.

Love Gods In Leisure Suits have been around for quite a few years...if you read Maximum Rock N Roll, you've seen their ads for demo tapes and t shirts. Basically they do a sort of goofy, cheesey 70's retro metal things, with a few countryish rockers thrown in for the good ole boys on the southern frat circuit no doubt, with a lot of show biz: Lead singer's another mock Elvis in a gold lame leisure suit, the guitarist is wearing a woman's bathrobe over a pair of boxer shorts, and so on. The singer dude is actually kind of funny, jumping down into the crowd to make goo goo eyes at the big mamas in the front row, and for these guys, the 30-minute time limit for the showcases worked well; any more would have been tedious.

The second band on the bill, Smoldering Ashes, have quite a following in the Tampa area, although I couldn't say why. The lead singer's a balding geek with a Kenny Loggins high-pitched voice and the music's a mishmash of AOR pop and 70's style art-rock, sort of like Kansas and REO Speedwagon.

It was the third band on the bill that had the biggest buzz: Miss America, fronted by 18-year old wunderkind Julian Cotter who's



SUPERCHUNK

backed by bass, drums, a girl on electric violin, and a girl on clarinet. Just the lineup is enough to raise eyebrows, but there's more: Julian starts every show with a spoken word intro (tonight he did some rap about being President that didn't make any sense), then does a solo acoustic number, generally some naive and innocent love song ala' Jonathan Richman. Then the band comes out (at this show, the bassist wasn't wearing anything but a pair of boxer shorts, since Julian announced "we voted and decided he'd pose for the photo when we got on the cover of The Bob.") There were more simple, three chord pop songs, some countryish tunes, and the set ended with a 5 minute feedback and guitar-noise jam right outta the Sonic Youth songbook. Keep an eye on this bunch, I bet you'll be hearing from them soon.

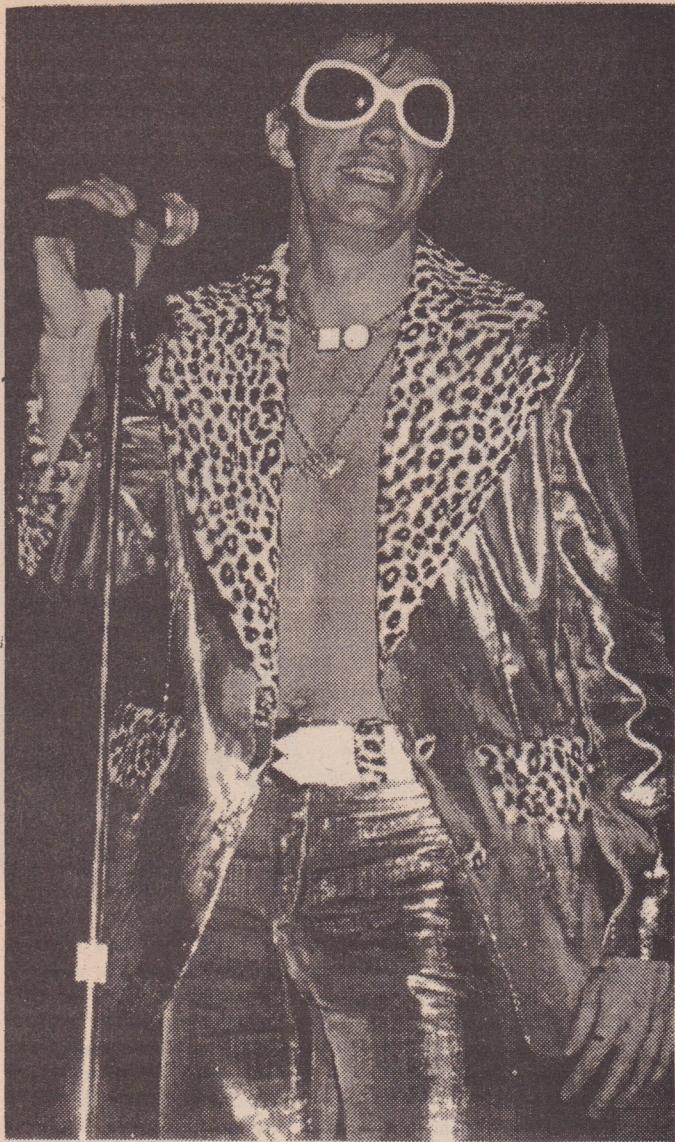
KILLING JOKE, Ritz Theater Ybor City, FL - Sunday, February 17

I think the reason they call this "industrial" music is because listening to it is as much fun as getting up and going to work at a factory in the morning.

LOOSE, BLISTERS, LUCY BROWN, Maxwell's Hoboken NJ - Saturday, February 23.

This proved to be a lot of fun, since two of the bands had interviews in the current Jersey Beat and all three appear on Sam Shiffman's 7" compilation. And it was great to see a bill of local bands actually fill Maxwell's on a Thursday.

Loose just get better and better, what with Paul Décolator's hair now approaching Sub-Poppian length. Mike Flaherty continues to blossom on vocals. Watching him front a band and thinking he's only 18, 19 years old, you kind of start to reconsider that reincarnation business. Maybe he used to be Shirley MacLaine in another lifetime. The Blisters were introducing their new drummer (Tony, ex-Newd) and doing their last gig as a trio (a female 2nd guitarist is signing on), and



LOVE GODS IN LEISURE SUITS

sounded great... Nitti (excuse me, Steve) Bahr's vocals sound stronger than ever, whether he's doing some inspired cover (the Blisters could earn a living off their version of the Replacements' "Takin' A Ride") or crooning one of the band's earnest originals. Still, it was up to Lucy Brown to get the crowd on their feet and moving. These dudes were in especially high spirits since they'd just signed a record deal with Noise International. I won't go into detail since they just had four pages in our last issue but they certainly don't lack in the charisma department. How they fare on vinyl should be interesting since their one weak point would seem to be their lyrics (which are repetitive and kind of dumb). Maybe they could mix it like the first few R.E.M. albums and just mumble everything. But hey, name a dance band with good lyrics anyway.

JUNK MONKEYS AND WAY TOO MANY OTHER BANDS, CBGB - Friday, March 9

Yes, it's yet another CBGB horror story. I arrive at the CBGB Pizza Boutique at 8 pm to interview the Junk Monkeys. So far, so cool - the Junkmonkeys turn out to be cool dudes, we swap war stories for about an hour, and go over to the club around 9 to see the show. The first band up turns out to be Zuzu's Petals, an all-gal trio from Minneapolis who - once you get past the singer's

offkey Shags-ish vocals - rock out tres' neat. Things quickly went downhill from there... The Slammin' Watusis, has-beens five years ago when they were signed (and quickly dropped) by Columbia, followed by, God, I forget... I do remember around 1:45 a.m. when Angel Rot, a local noize combo of no discernible merit (who weren't even supposed to be on the 6-band bill, thus stretching the evening's entertainment to 7 fucking bands), ended their set by blowing up two television sets, filling the crowd with PCB-laden toxic smoke and driving out the few remaining customers. At that point, I decided to write the night off, and heard later that the Junk Monkeys (the headliners, by the way) went on at 2:45 a.m., played three songs to about four paying customers, and called it a night. Way to go, Louise.

8-BALL, FREAKBEANS, ADMIRAL, ALL FALL DOWN, ABC No Rio - Saturday matinee, March 9

One of those ABC No Rio matinees with all out of town bands, which meant that most of the regulars were nowhere to be seen. Still, Admiral brought a contingent with them from Harrisburg and a bunch of kids came down from Albany to see All Fall Down, who now include ex-GO! guitarist Aaron (he's going to SUNY Albany these days). 8-Ball started things off with a nondescript set of generic hardcore that didn't make any sort of impression. But what a surprise Freakbeans turned out to be. From the D.C. area, these mooks looked like the biggest bunch of nerds walking around before the show, with glasses and big bunched-up sweaters. Once they got on stage and stripped down to t-shirts, they raged -- a funky, punk explosion of hot riffs, amazingly frenetic bass, and a frontman who jittered and twitched with more energy than Henry Rollins covered with red ants. Wow. Admiral did their usual high-intensity hyper-emo thing, the small stage somewhat subduing the antics of lead singer Sean, but still a great show - and surprise, surprise, by this time the place had actually filled up. The full house thinned out a bit for All Fall Down, and too bad -- new holders of the Most Improved Hardcore Band award, the new players add a ton of heft and heaviness to the formerly wimpy 7 Seconds-ish All Fall Down sound, although the melody and merriness remain intact. Frontman Keith Allan, tanked on 64-oz Buds, slapped on a cheek-to-cheek grin that wouldn't go away and caromed through the set with slaphappy self-indulgence, a monumental change from the uptight punk weenie of last summer's ABC appearance. Keep the suds flowing and I'll go see this combo anytime.

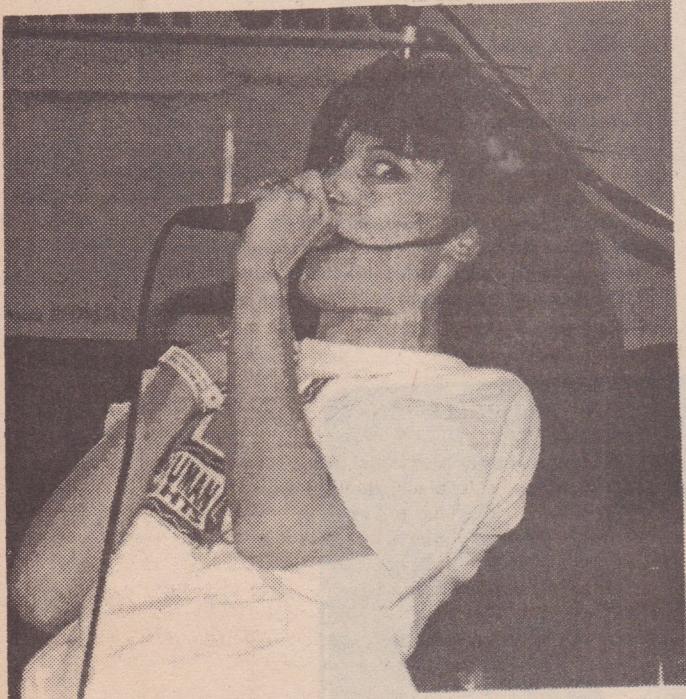
GOO GOO DOLLS, JUNK MONKEYS - Maxwells, Saturday, March 9

Thank god for Maxwells. The Monkeys go on at 11:30, rock the shit out of the place, smoking through a great set of no-frills flannel-shirt rock and roll to an enthusiastic reception. The Goo Goos follow and play a killer set that had the crowd swinging from the chandeliers (well, they woulda been if Maxwell had chandeliers, but people were dancing on top of the window sills), ending the set with about five consecutive covers that set some kind of world's record for coolness. After the horror show of the night before, it was four hours of heaven.

JIM AND FRANK'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE - The 5th Annual South By Southwest Music & Media Convention, Austin, Texas -- March 21 - 24

For my third SXSW convention, I talked Frank Phobia of Anthrophobia into coming too and sharing a hotel room, provided a much needed sidekick to bolster the Lone Ranger Of Punk image I try to project at these shindigs. Needless to say, I had a blast, but who wouldn't? Four days of non-stop shmoozing with industry biggies smart enough to cadge four days in warm, convivial Austin, four nights of bands, four fun-filled days of good Mexican food, great Shiner Bock beer, and, shit, let's not forget the best part, four days away from New York...

Thursday, March 21 - Arrive at the convention just in time to miss the Press Panel, chaired by the ageless Chris Morris of Billboard, my personal role model ever since Lester Bangs passed on and Christgau turned into a stayathome bottle-washing wussie. Turns out Chris had mentioned my Pazz & Jop Poll point about rock crits dividing out into "stayathomes" and "clubrats," turning me into an instant celebrity (Warhol was right, it lasted about 15 minutes). Most of the rest of the idea was spent shmoozing, grabbing some decent Mexican chow at Manuel's, and hitting the clubs: Started the night out with one of the big surprises of the seminar, Southern Culture On The Skids, a wacked-out white-trash trio with a hilarious hillbilly stage presence and some killer psychobilly tunes. Just imagine what you'd get if you took some of the hickoids from Hee Haw and fed them all the drugs the Butthole Surfers have done over the past five years and you get the idea. We missed the Magnolias but did catch the Wannabes, a faceless rock combo who lived up to their name, and the big buzz band of the seminar, School Of Fish, an okay pop band with rockstar attitude bigger than their hooks. Watch for them on Capitol Records. Sauntered over to Chance's, which turned out to be not so much a "rock club" as a circus tent pitched on a sandy lot. Mega cool. Stick People are a hot Austin band but I can't figger why; they sounded about as "alternative" as Whitney Houston, slick commercial Adult Contemporary pap delivered by a band that dressed like extras on a bad Laugh In rerun. Jody Grind aren't very alternative either, just a way cool jazz combo with some rock riffs, but oh how that girl can sing. With stars in my eyes and about four Shiner Bocks in my belly, I drifted through the warm Austin evening air back to the hotel to recharge for the next day.



KILL WHITEY

Friday, March 22

I really wanted to attend the panel on clubs, since Louise Parnassa of CBGB's was on it, so I could ask her about why she books seven bands on Friday nights and generally goes out of her way to make an evening at CBGB's about as much fun as The Spanish Inquisition. But the small panel on covering a local rock beat was going at the same time and I opted that. Moderator Wif Stenger of NY Press showed up 15 minutes late and totally unprepared, but he knew who I was so I forgave him, and there



JODY GRIND

was enough good-natured give 'n take between all the other press hacks there to make for lively conversation.

That night's entertainment started with Kill Whitey, a much-touted Lawrence, Kansas punk band who have gone 100% heavy-metal. A little too generically speedmetal for my ears, but Frank fell in love with the hot redheaded lead singer. We split up at this point, and I walked over to Liberty Lunch to see Peter Holsapple and Chris Stamey. I wasn't sure what kind of crowd this would draw -- old-timers looking for a hit of Eighties nostalgia? college radio kids who'd discovered the dB's in their station's record library? -- but the answer turned out to be a little bit of everybody. By the time the boys (and I use the word loosely; Peter's wearing a fedora onstage now to cover his bald spot, and Chris has this new haircut with sideburns that make him look like Buck Owens) started, the place was wall-to-wall people, and Liberty Lunch is a VERY big club. Despite some equipment problems, the duo sounded great, whether dueling on an old Gene Clark tune with near-perfect Byrdsian harmonies or taking a turn singing lead on their own compositions. None of this stuff bristles with the wit and verve of Repercussion but it's miles above the last Holsapple-era dB's lp, Sound Of Music.

Frank had gone off to see a Houston band called Peglegasus, which featured an old college pal of his who had moved south from Philly after school. He praised their stage presence (one of the guys wore a polar bear suit) and said they rocked. We met up again at The Ritz for a bunch of bands on Houston's Trance Records, including Sugar Shack, an okay funk band, the Pain Teens, a psychedelic thrash combo with a captivating female singer, and Crust, a noisy industrial group who bang on a lot of metal trashcans and make an entertaining racket. I capped the evening off with the Junk Monkeys, who played even louder and faster than they had at Maxwells. After the set, they introduced me to Metal Blade honcho Mike Faley, who wouldn't shake hands, apparently still upset about my ongoing and altogether petty feud with his label about sending me promo cassettes instead of CD's (Metal Blade has abandoned vinyl).

Saturday, March 23

My panel started off the day at 11 a.m., and of course since everybody was either still in bed or out nursing a hangover, it wasn't very well attended. Still, we had some cool people on the panel, including Gina Arnold from San Francisco and Bill Wyman from Chicago's Reader, and we did a decent job of thrashing out the responsibilities of local critics to their local scenes without going too far afield or getting bawled out by Jim Fouratt, always a plus for any rock convention panel.

Frank and I wanted to catch either Those Melvins from Connecticut or Junior Gone Wild from Canada, but we spent that time instead scarfing down an EXTREMELY expensive meal courtesy of Sony Music Corp (that's CBS and Epic to you), which a couple of publicist friends were nice enough to put on their corporate credit cards. A little later at The Ritz, Frank and I agreed the Cavedogs rocked quite sweetly despite horrific sound, and Frank later reported that the Jack Officers - the Buttholes offshoot band - were loud and uninteresting and played much too long. Nothing else from that night made much of an impression.

Sunday was spent playing softball with our fellow conventioneers (Frank's band team lost in the first round. I pitched for the print media team, shutting down our first opponents for an easy win. In the second game though, the other guys wouldn't swing at bad pitches; when I threw strikes, they clobbered the ball. We wound up losing by one run in extra innings. Wait till next year!) and scarfing enormous amounts of barbecue, which always reminds me of the stuff they ate in the gas station scene in Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

EMF, The Marquee, NYC - Wednesday, March 27

Publicists call me all the time about their bands. Most of the time, I don't bite. This time I did, gobbling up the presskit and British pressclips on this band. I wound up buying my own ticket anyway though. EMF is a way young British dance/pop band, and although they've really only got one song that anybody's heard yet ("Unbelievable"), they're hot stuff back in England and probably destined for the same here. The "Unbelievable" video's been turning up on MTV with alarming regularity, and it certainly seemed catchy enough. Reason enough to check the boys out.

The Marquee is a relatively new venue in New York, a big old refurbished truck garage on the Lower West Side that holds about 1000 people. My ticket said 8 p.m. but this is New York, so I showed up at around 9:30 and found the house about three-quarters full, house music blaring over the p.a. and the audience looking dull and bored, hands in pockets; that typical chronically hip New York attitude all over the place.

Pushing my way to the front of the stage, I found the sort of crowd you might expect at a New Kids or George Michael concert - trendy teenage girls bouncing on their toes expectantly, and their bored, mildly effeminate post-modern boyfriends in earrings and funny haircuts tagging along beside them.

After another hour of hip hop and house music, the lights finally went down and the band came on stage at 10:30 p.m. (for an 8 o'clock show, remember, no opening band). .pa

If EMF has an MVP, it's the guy behind the scenes who works their lights and smoke; it's the special effects that makes this comes alive. The music is pop but the beat is dance, and the combination of live drums, guitar and bass and all those acidhouse lights flashing like mad inspired the boys in the crowd into Olympic caliber stage dives and got most of the girls dancing. It didn't sound bad, James' sweet, high-pitched vocals wafting over a rowdy, energetic set of hi-nrg dance tunes. A lot hotter than Happy Mondays, anyway, and way more interesting than the zombiefied Charlantans.

It quickly became obvious that the band was playing to a backing track; the orchestral waves of synth, samples, and keyboards filling out the band's sound couldn't possibly have been coming from the tiny plastic keyboard that Derry was playing, especially since he spent most of time throwing it in the air, jumping on it, and tossing himself all over the stage.

Thirty minutes after they started, the band skiddaddled off stage; a 30 minute set, \$10 ticket, no opening act. Sheesh. Mild applause brought Derry out to announce "Fuck you, New York, San Francisco yelled twice as loud!" That raised the ante and the crowd made a little more noise, bringing the band back for the obligatory encores. It was their last song that finally explained the initials: "E! is for Ecstasy! / M! Mothafukkamotheafukka/F! from us to you!" Oh great, I thought, just what America needs - teenybopper hearthrobs hawking hallucinogenic drugs to white kids who buy dance records. I wonder how Tiger Beat is gonna handle this?

THRILLCATS, SOUND OF SKIN, Maxwells - Thursday, March 28

Thrillcats didn't draw diddly, even though they're just from Brooklyn, haven't got a club about drawing up a consistently paced set list, and played an hour - two fatal faux pas that should effectively keep them from a return engagement at Maxwells until sometime well into 1995. Sound Of Skin play industrial hard rock ala' Nine Inch Nails and feature a familiar face in their guitarist, Travis, yet another Maxwells employee (he's a busboy) with a band. The band's got charisma and chops, even if the music seems a bit derivative at this point.



EMF

Photo by Michele Taylor

BOUNCING SOULS, CATHARSIS, LOOSE, Court Tavern - Saturday, April 27

A few people whose opinion I respect chided me for dissing New Brunswick's Bouncing Souls in the "Funk Weenie" piece we did last issue, so this show on the band's home turf seemed like a good opportunity for a second chance. And okay, granted, they've come a long way -- much smoother stage presence, and they're tighter than Keith Hartel's old spandex pants. And along with their mainstay funk, they've incorporated bits of ska, reggae and soul into their songs, providing a little breathing space between the non-stop slap bass funk groove thing. But as long as they keep shaving their heads, taking off their shirts, and playing the that kind of music, the Chili Peppers comparisons are never gonna go away.

In some ways, Catharsis is the epitome of the New Brunswick Band: Talented underachievers who rarely play out of town, these four guys in flannel shirts and bad haircuts still manage to impress the hell out of me every time I see them. They put out a thick psychedelic soundstorm with every instrument contributing a vital piece to the overall effect - swirling non-stop leads, choppy rhythm guitars, pulsating floating bass lines, and simple, steady drum beats. Other, better known bands who play the same sort of stuff - the Flaming Lips come to mind - almost always lose me midway through one of their long jams, but Catharsis' songs always hold my interest from the first trebley note to the last blast of feedback. They've got a single coming out on Noiseville Records.



BOUNCING SOULS

What can I say about Loose that we didn't say last issue? How much gushing praise can we lavish on a band before you people out there realize you're in the presence of greatness? Well, one observation -- lead singer Mike Flaherty seems to have aged from 18 to 26 in about six months. Oh, and one more... I think the band xeroxed their set list a couple of months ago and just keep repeating it, not a great idea when you play as many local shows as these guys do. Granted, they're great songs, and the band - with Paul Decolator's gyrating pelvis providing the action and Flaherty's intense vocals providing the rest - makes the most of them. But counting their Maxwells show in February, I saw them three times in three months and I don't think the sets differed by more than one song, if that. C'mon, guys, if you're not writing new songs - and if not, why not?? - then at least learn a few more covers. Although the "Charles In Charge" theme that starts off the show is a gas, I didn't need to hear it two days in a row.

RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED, ROYAL CRESCENT MOB, Maxwells - Thursday, May 4

I'd seen Rights twice before, both times in big venues -- you know, the kind of show where they're on stage, I'm in the back, and there's 800 screaming metalheads between us. But at Maxwell's, I got to stand close enough to see the tartar on the drummer's teeth, and it was a lot more fun. These guys sound like a cross between Wreckless Eric and Kiss -- catchy, driving punk rock crossed with catchy, driving arena-rock. And the arena-rock wannabe stage moves - which get annoying in a big place - look so silly in a tiny room like Maxwell's that they actually seemed endearing and cute. I smiled through the whole set and could've sat through the whole thing again.

Actually, given what followed, I could've sat through a root canal more pleasurable than Royal Crescent Mob. As we noted last issue, there are great numbers of ungainly white people with absolutely no sense of rhythm who love to fill clubs and flop around listening to these hideous funk weenie bands. The Mob, although they've been around a good long time, fall into the same category of White Funk (talk about your oxymorons) as the Spin Doctors, and their fans (talk about your morons) share an affinity for the Grateful Dead. In fact, these may be the last people alive who still use the word "boogie" in serious conversation. The band doesn't know any good songs, doesn't play their instruments particularly well, and dress like extras in a high school production of "Hair," but that doesn't deter their fans from bouncing up and down with glee at the slightest hint of a backbeat. Don't these people listen to real music? I mean, God, if they get orgasmic over this shit, what would happen if they ever heard Funkadelic? They'd probably explode. If I seem in a foul mood, blame it on the short, obese woman who looked like Yogi Berra (no, that's not true, Yogi didn't have a mustache) and kept slamming her 250 lb midriff into my thighs throughout the set. If I ever have to sit through another night like this, so help me I'm bringing along a can of Mace.

THOSE MELVINS, YOUTH GONE MAD, SEA MONKEYS - Thursday, May 9 - Maxwell's

The theme of tonight's seminar in PUNK 101 is "Bands That Don't Take Themselves Too Seriously." Yes, it was Let's Get Silly Night at Maxwell's, starting with Those Melvins, who seem to be overcoming their unfortunate suburban Connecticut bar band urges and tightening up their act. Nifty pop ditties with lots of catchy riffs make these guys go POP, and it's lead singer Skeets who keeps it all very light and fluffy, with lots of nerdy in-between song patter and copious mugging throughout the tunes. Next up were Youth Gone Mad, who've recruited Big Jim Fourniadis (of Rats Of Unusual Size fame) on bass and kinda sound like four spuds who listen to their Ramones records 11 hours a day. Cool stage moves and lotsa ramalama punk spunk make these guys and gal a fun listen. Who was the geek in the 60's duds who threw the ping pong balls all over the crowd?

It wasn't a bad crowd for a Thursday night/local bands show, although things thinned out a bit by the time the Sea Monkeys got

on. These mofos didn't seem to mind though; they rocked the house and got very silly indeed, dousing the audience (and the lead singer) with Silly String among other shenanigans. Scum rock lives.

MOTEL SHOOTOUT, POSTER CHILDREN, OUTCROWD Friday, May 10

Cynics say that "alternative" is what record labels call bands who don't sell a lot of records. It's certainly starting to look that way. I mean, you have the Pixies, certainly an "alternative" band. An alternative to what? Maybe the high-powered hype, rock star bullshit you get from the glam metal boys on MTV, no? So what do you call it when Black Francis, the Pixies' singer, does a solo performance at 8 p.m., goes on at 10 p.m., and charges nine bucks a pop, almost double the usual door? I can understand why Maxwell's agreed to put the show on -- it did sell out, and the club can use all the business it can get -- but this sort of egomania does not sit well with yours truly.

I arrived at the club just as the Black Francis crowd was filing out, so there was a good long wait while the gear was disassembled and the next band's stuff got set up. I hung around with Motel Shootout's Keith Hartel for a while, pressing him for the story of his life (especially the part where he quit Adrenalin O.D. to move to L.A. and join the Nymphs), but if you want to hear about it, you'll have to wait for the interview. Anyway, just as I was ready to go into the backroom for the first band, Black Francis emerged from the basement dressing room in a stunning black on black ensemble, a blonde bimbo in a red halter top on his arm, surrounded by no less than five syncophants and flunkies. As he walked out, some churl was hear to exclaim, "Elvis has left the arena." But I digress.

Motel Shootout looked bright and Springy in their white cotton t shirts and shoulder length hair. You wouldn't think a band fronted by Keith (AOD, Pleased Youth) Hartel would sound this much like vintage Elvis Costello, but there you go. Some hard rocking tuneage but all pretty mainstream, and the baby-faced teen drummer didn't fuck up the beat more than once that I noticed.

The Poster Children from Chicago have been a fave of mine since they were discovered by Mike Potential about two years ago. Twin/Tone snatched them up and finally is just releasing their lp, a little late for this tour which left the band lamenting what it's like on tour when your record label is flat broke. ("It's like being on tour when your record label has no money," said lead singer/guitarist Rick.) The P-Kids have changed second guitarists and frankly, I don't like the replacement as much as his predecessor. Much of the frantic and swirling interplay between the two gtrs has been lost, and not it's a lot of heavy riffing over throbbing bass. Okay but it's Sub-Pop City and you can hear that all over the place these days.

No sooner had the Poster Kids hit the last chord than I was out the door and trotting down Washington Street to Live Tonight!, where I arrived just in time for the first song by the Outcrowd. These goobers left D.C. (they weren't a hardcore band, weren't on Dischord, and couldn't buy a break there) and moved to Jersey City, NJ, a while ago to make their fortune. Now here they were on a Friday night, having posterized the city from one end to the other and done a big mailing, and they hadn't drawn a dozen people. Oh well. You could tell they were a little pissed -- lead singer kept urging the yuppies in the front bar to come to the back and groove on the music to no avail - but they performed a rockin' set nonetheless. Very hard pop, not unlike what American Standard is doing these days (with quite similar vocals, actually). They had a gig in the city the next night which hopefully drew a little better.

LOOSE, CANNANES, STEEL POLE BATHTUB, Wednesday, May 16

Since I'd be heading over to the Knitting Factory later for Todd Abramson's "Big Combo" show, my first stop of the



YOUTH GONE MAD

evening was Loose's 8:30 pm showcase performance at CBGB. Quite a few familiar New Brunswick faces trekked into the city for this one, and reportedly, so did a heavy-duty A&R dude from BMG. Stay tuned. About the only thing different from this set and the last two times I'd seen Loose though were the t shirts (black tonight, white last time), and oh yeah, Paul Decolator was wearing shorts (nice gams, there, Paul). The band promised "at least 7 new songs" by the next time I saw them. Yeah. Anyway, this turned out to be quite a rockin' set, a lot better than they were at New Brunswick or Princeton just a few weeks before (see above), proving that these guys can "turn it on" when it counts.

A few blocks south and west took me to the Knitting Factory for The Big Combo show. This was a pretty loony triple bill - the Cannanes from New Zealand, the awesome Steel Pole Bathtub from Frisco, and Scrawl from the midwest. The Cannanes, well, I didn't get it. Four mooks who couldn't play their instruments, couldn't sing in key, and didn't have any interesting songs. But hey, they were from New Zealand so of course they had their little cult following mouthing along all the inane lyrics. Steel Pole Bathtub, as previously stated, awesome. Samples of hellish crowd noises emanated from two hidden tape recorders (one triggered by guitarist Mike, another by bassist Dale), coupled with ultra-intense guitar/bass noise rock and Darren More-X's superbly chaotic drumming. "Soul Cannon" took a standard funk riff and, between the sonic noise storm set up by Mike and Dale, and the samples, turned it into telemetry. The band seemed to think no one liked them, maybe because there wasn't a slam pit. But Knitting Factory regulars don't mosh, they stand there with their arms folded and then applaud like hell when they like you. Which they did.



360's

"Texas" 7"

Link Records

So are the 360's gonna be the next big cutting edge thing? It's got that sterile, heavy, overproduced "Big Rock" banal sound that's so annoyingly BORING! College dweebs in wacky Bart Simpson t shirts will be digging this manure like underfed houseplants. These guys are the next Cult...need I say more?

- Terry T.

ALLIGATOR

"Downwind From The Outhouse," 7" EP

Lubricated, 1086 Tulsa St, Uniondale NY 11553

So far for 1991, I've heard maybe only five truly great pop singles. This is one of them.

The pretty, acoustic, twisty guitar playing from guesting Superchunker Jim couple with John McMahon's expressive and original singing gives this 7" a totally refreshing air. My fave track is "Blue Crabs," which is really charming in a weird way. The wistfully sincere vocals of John are paired with Anne Hayden and the resultant duet is cute and sweet, but not at all too "foo-foo-fruity." When I hear Alligator, I think of brilliant groups like the Embarassment or Danny & The Door Knobs. Highly recommended.

- Terry T.

BREAKDOWN

"Killing Time" 7" EP

Soundless, % Ken Helwig, Box 641, Saratoga CA 95071

Anyone on the East Coast - especially the New York area - might have thought this to be a full-on hardcore record, with both the band's name and EP title sounding NY/HC generic. But instead, this is lightly salted pop from the West Coast. Like some other California bands, they concentrate on one theme - girls. But unlike those other bands, these guys never put any strength into their music. Good intentions, but I prefer Green Day or Sweet Baby.

- Tom A.

COMMONWEALTH

"Nomava" 7" EP

Free Thought

I'm searching for comparisons but not finding any. I guess that makes it original, and hey, that's a plus. Upbeat, somewhat eclectic hardcore from the suburbs of Washington, DC and a promising debut.

- Mike H.

COUNTERPUNCH

"Within Reach" EP

Your Future

Typical straight edge music done competently, but without much personality. Four songs I swear I've heard before by any of the many. Potential is evident through strong musicianship.

- Mike H.

DOOMSDAY

2 song 7"

BUF, PO Box 14201, Pittsburgh PA 15239

They thank Poison Idea and there's a photo with the guitarist wearing a P.I. shirt, so guess who has an influence on Doomsday? Side 1 is a hard-to-the-core number with many a mosh part to it, while Side 2 is more straight ahead. No bullshit, aggressive to the rim, and down to earth lyrics. Only two songs but has a lyric sheet and vinyl sticker. Check dis out.

- Tom A.

EYE FOR AN EYE

"Omega Drone" EP

Blackout

Tough Boston hardcore with a pinch of funk. I'm not sure if the lyrics condone violence (as in "Signs Of The Pride") or condemn it ("All Stars"). The packaging is amazing, with a full color poster sleeve, unfortunately boosting the price of the 7" to \$4.25. They should've done a 12" EP with more music instead of putting so much effort into the sleeve.

- Mike H.

ETHYL MEATPLOW

"4 Songs On Colored Vinyl" EP

Motiv/Spasm, PO Box 38220, Hollywood CA 90038

Driller abraso-white boy industro-funk w/ samples galore. This is echoed-out, eye makeup, post-punk fun. Calls to mind early Faith No More, PIL, Skinny Puppy, and Front 242. Creepy disco for white geeks that don't know how to dance.

- Terry T.

INSIDE OUT

"No Spiritual Surrender" 7"

Revelation

Blistering hardcore via two tons of guitar crunch and gutwrenching vocals. The expected Revelation quality production and packaging. There's some kind of irony in the lyrics of the title track, "No Spiritual Surrender" and guitarist Vic's involvement with the Krishna's though, no?

- Mike H.

JELLO BIAFRA

"Die For Oil, Sucker" 7"

Alternative Tentacles

I always thought spoken word records were kind of self indulgent and pointless; they'd be better off in written form (more could be sold and for less money). I still feel this way, but Jello and John Yates do provide us with an informative and graphically pleasing (or displeasing) foldout sleeve. In case you couldn't figure it out, this is a topical release dealing with the war in the Gulf, and more specifically, draft resistance. But hey, who cares? The war's over, right? Yeah.

- Mike H.

NATION OF ULYSSES

"Sound of Young America" 7"

K/Dischord

What the hell are these guys singing about anyway?? Hey, man, I got a four-year degree in Political Science and I can't make head or tails out of this weird anarcho-Islamic-Maoist-Straight Alert-Libertarian-Buddhism. Whatever their righteous political agenda, the music is TOTALLY HAPPENING - driven rock 'n roll with enough distorted dissonance via horns and a skewed vocalist to keep you on edge. Reminiscent of really early Minutemen or Saccharine Trust records. If Mission of Burma had a head on collision with the Laughing Clowns, the resultant chaos and traffic jam would sound like Nation of Ulysses. And that's good music, if you ask me.

- Terry T.

ONE THIN DIME

"Quattro" 7"

Pagan, PO Box 616, San Pedro CA 90733

This single reminds me of a cleaner sounding SubPop band, or maybe something that could've come out on Homestead a few years ago. Nothing special or attention holding, sorry. Four songs and really cool cover art.

- Tom A.

OUTCRY

The Buffalo EP

Minn. hardcore staples Outcry disbanded in 1988. These are four tracks culled from their never-released second LP. Totally melodic chunky Mid-80's stuff before h/c got too speedy or just plain tuneless. If yr into this bag, then grab it.

- Terry T.

PEGBOY

"Field Of Darkness"/"Walk On By"

Touch & Go

Two straightforward tunes packed with melody and vocal harmony. But what else could be expected with ex-Naked Raygun and Effigies members in the band? This is a great, powerful single. My only complaint is the fifth grade rhyming scheme of the lyrics - "Sunday and I'm feeling bored/and I'm feeling like my head is tore/just can't take it anymore." C'mon, really.

- Mike H.

POP DEFECT

2 song 7"

Flipside, Box 363, Whittier CA 90608

POPDEFECT are just that. This three-piece throw in a dash of Southern flair and create a pretty full-sounding and catchy single. One regular tune and one instrumental with a funny ending.

- Tom A.

POST MORTEM

"Ring Around The Rectum" 7" EP

Telstar, 57 Chester St, Belmont MA 02178

Well, you're not gonna get much more punk rock than this one. 3 songs, all fucking dragged out, long and annoying like you wouldn't believe. Great to give to a friend on their birthday to see if they ever call you again.

- Tom A.

SCARLET DROPS

"Sweet Happiness," 7"

Harriet, Box 649, Cambridge, MA 02238

The A side of Canada's Scarlet Drops' new single is a decent catchy pop ditty but Deb's singing on this rubs me the wrong way. She has this sorts new-wavey phrasing that sometimes reminds me of early B 52's. Geez. The B side is a lot cooler, with dual vocal interplay between Deb & Dan; fast, buzzy guitar pop, reminiscent of the Buzzcocks. Dan should watch it though, sometimes he lapses into L.A. glammy punk like Concrete Blonde, which detracts from the greatness of the songs.

- Terry T.

SOUND OF MY OWN VOICE

"Where's Tommy?" 7"

Noiseville

Saw the Noiseville label - home of the Action Swingers and Bench - and expected some really neat noise. Boy, was I surprised at the wholesome, catchy Sixties-flavored pop that came streaming out of the old speakers. This fresh-faced guy tuneage would not sound out of place next to your Big Dipper and Dave Clark 5 records. And unlike the other scuzzy, junkie, skunk, low-life scum rockers on Noiseville, these boys sound like the kind of guys a nice girl like me could take home to meet Mom and Dad.

- Terry T.

TVTV\$

2 Song 7"

PoshBoy, Box 4474, Palm Desert CA 92261

Side A, "Television Religion," has funny lyrics but the music never goes anywhere. Side B, "U.S.ing Us," starts with a cool sample, breaks into guitar work that reminded me of the music on the Spiderman tv show, when Spidey would slide up a wall instead of climbing it, and has Ozzie-ish vocals and mid-tempo exuberant music, something Flipside surely loves.

- Tom A.

COMPILATIONS

A FOOL'S PARADISE - Santa Barbara 7" Comp

Little Redhead

First of all, Jamey from The Fanzine That Had No Name deserves a hearty round of applause for his "self righteous fuck you to \$3.50 EP's" and for keeping his record at a reasonable \$2.50 without compromising quality. The packaging includes a 16 page booklet with a S.B. scene report and a two-page spread each for 5 bands, as well as a free bookmark encouraging punks to read! Oh yeah, and there's a record too. Side 1 takes a sillier garage punk approach with Latch Key Kids, Suckerpunch, and PMS, an all female band doing a song about the benefits of masturbation. Side 2 features Reality Control and the high point of the record, Downcast. Do It Yourself lives!

- Mike H.

COWBOY TEA SHOW - 10" compilation

Rocket Sound, Box 40397, St Paul MN 55104

On this 10", sub-titled "Compilator Volume 1," are four bands with one song apiece, and sounding like they'd fit onto a current CBGB's bill. Morganatics mix in some moody, depressing riffs, then hightail it into a steady, pounding stride. Monster Zero, the best of the bunch, keeps the energy alive with a chunk of guitar-driven rock. Bone Club reminded me of a second-rate Shudder To Think if they'd have come from Seattle. Finally, Superball 63, like Monster Zero, give the goods with a more underground feel.

- Tom A.

OPEN ZINE IV - 7" compilation

Greg, PO Boxx 482, Paoli PA 19301

Here's a mixed bag of stuff that works. Admiral throw out a mid-tempo, Marginal Man-sounding tune that has some unique changes. 23 More Minutes tell a tall tale from the West with a bouncy, ear-catching feel. The other side has Geko, delivering a dreary, eerie goth-pop song that's memorable, while Edgewise remind us of the importance of friendship, ala' NYHC. The record also has pages of good and funny art work. I wish the overall production was better, but this is still a good buy.

- Tom A.

NEW WORLD ORDER

Maximum Rock N Roll

Here is a split 7" with Bad Religion and Noam Chomsky. Like myself, I'm sure that a lot of people will buy this for the music, and since Bad Religion are popular, this will reach a lot more people obviously because of their participation. Here, Bad Religion give us music dealing with the Gulf War, two songs that are excellent and much like their other stuff, only not as polished. The second side is a spoken word piece by Noam Chomsky, clocking in at almost eight minutes, that is well-delivered and extremely interesting. Also included is a large foldout poster with loads of information about different aspects of the war.

- Tom A.

SQUAT OR ROT #2, 7" EP

PO Box 20012, Tompkins Sq Sta, NYC 10009

A definite improvement over the first Squat Or Rot 7" comp, included on #2 are five bands and a newspaper foldover sleeve full of lyrics and art collages to invoke some thought and change (sorry if that sounds fake or corny). My favorite cuts include Jesus Christ, cracking out a song deeper and heavier than a conversation with Donny The Punk; The Apostates, with a catchy, mellow tune full of gloom and doom, and a surprise in Yuppicide, who give us an excellent punker that's lyrically and musically different from the rest. Well worth getting. Watch for #3 of this series, which will have a Deviators tune.

- Tom A.

UGLY AMERICAN OVERKILL TOUR 7" EP

Amphetamine Reptile

Here we have somewhat of a sampler of Amphetamine Reptile bands. Tracks by Tar, Helmet and Surgery plain rock. The God Bullies tune is a bit too much. A good record to introduce you to what the label has to offer.

- Mike H.

THE BARRACUDAS
The Complete EMI Records, CD
Capitol/EMI

The Barracudas were just as big an anachronism back in 1979 as they are today, a British new-wave pop band that preferred surf rock and bubblegum to the harder edged punk of the day. I remember bits and pieces of these songs from the radio and my 7" collection, but it was still a rush discovering how cool these guys were. Fans of surf rock take note: Don't let this slip away without adding it to your collection. Pick hits: "Surfers Are Back," "I Wish It Could Be 1965 Again," and "The KGB Made A Man Out Of Me."

- Jim T.

BEATNIK TERMITES

"Beatnik Termites" 12" EP
PO Box 06121, Cleveland OH 44107

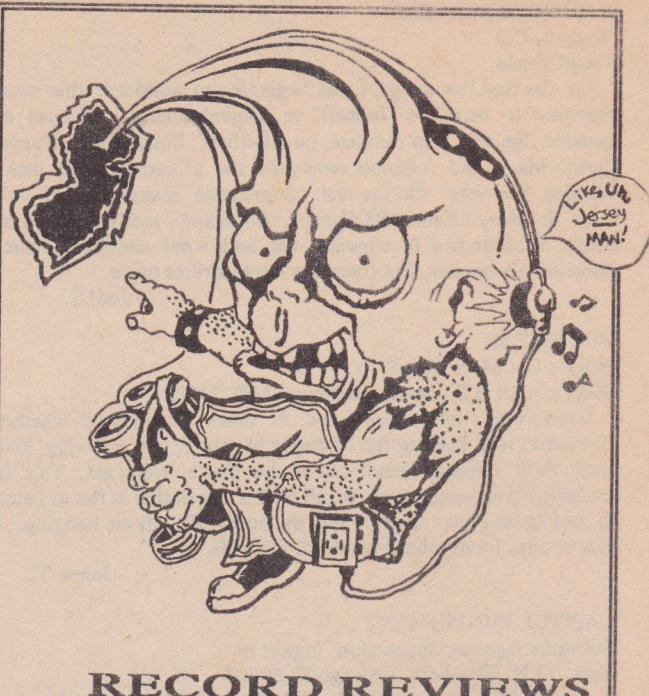
Groovy, enjoyable pop from this Cleveland trio. Catchy hooks and energetic Sweet baby and Buzzcocks influences make this 7-song EP a record to have.

- Jamie T.

JELLO BIAFRA & NO MEANS NO

The Sky Is Falling & I Want My Mommy, lp
Alternative Tentacles, Box 11458, San Francisco CA 94101

Another get-together by Jello, this time with Canada's greatest professional wrestlers, Nomeansno. It's just like it sounds - lunatic vocals backed by heavy, masterminded arrangements of agile punk. Where the credit is given to Jello for both music and lyrics, it's speed of light, right on the dime - like you'd expect ("Jesus Was A Terrorist"). Other songs are more typical NMN - sonic, maimed blasts going in odd places. Also, what seems to be standard with Biafra, side 2 contains the long songs (but nothing



RECORD REVIEWS

like the 30 minutes with Lard). But they're good too. Great lyrics (everything from gene manipulation to space junk), music, cover, etc etc. To be purchased.

- Tom A.



BUTTHOLE SURFERS

photos by Shawn Scallen

BUTTHOLE SURFERS

Pioughd, CD
Rough Trade

For the first few songs, I was beginning to wonder if this was supposed to be called "Jackoff" or "Digital Dump," because it sounded like shit. No frenzies, no mindfuck. Then came "Hurdy Gurdy Man" and it almost redeemed the aforementioned jism. "Golden Showers" did the rest. "Sometimes" makes fun of the Jesus & Mary Chain, "PSY" is psychotic and I really liked this album after the first four tracks. Ok, so it's not another Locust Abortion Technician, but lightning never strikes twice.

- Jodi S.

BUTTSTEAK

Fatty's Got More Blood, lp
Merkin, 310 E Biddle St, Baltimore MD 21202

Good, silly, interesting band. At times I wondered whether Buttsteak was making fun of stupid people or just showing how lame their sense of humor can be, but that's irrelevant. This is melodic Pixies-esque rock 'n roll with a punch that is fun to listen to, but again I have to gripe that the humor (?) left me hanging. I was hoping funny-punk was dead. Oh well.

- Jamie T.

CAPITOL PUNISHMENT

Bulwarks Against Oppression, import lp
Rotz, 17 N. Elizabeth, Chicago IL 60607

This 1989 lp from California's Capitol Punishment is now available as a German import through Rotz Records. The mix is a bit thin and some of the songs sound alike, but Capitol Punishment still gives you quality punkcore with every song. Some of the lyrics deal with familiar topics (scene violence, anti-religion, heavy metal stupidity) and others are unexpected (song about a kid throwing his life away in the boxing ring, and a cover of the old 60's garage rocker "Strychnine"). If you're into the SoCal punk thing, you'll like this.

- Jim T.

ALEX CHILTON

19 Years: A Collection Of Alex Chilton, CD
Rhino

Alex Chilton never achieved any sort of real stardom, but when the Bangles and Replacements played homage to him a few years ago, the great albums he made with his band Big Star re-emerged on CD for a new generation. This CD fills in the blanks -- the pre- and post-Big Star tracks Chilton's left behind. What you hear is a precocious and volatile talent with a deep rootsy blues bent ("I'm Free"), befuddled and twisted by drugs like a latterday Brian Wilson (the tracks from the "lost" third Big Star lp). In 1977, Chilton joined the fringes of the NY punk movement and made a great single, "Bangkok", backed by the Seeds' "Can't Seem To Make You Mine" (re-emphasizing Lenny Kaye's seminal link between 70's and 60's punk rock). The brilliantly twisted Like Flies On Sherbet lp followed, and then a long dry spell, during which Chilton emerged as a producer for bands like the Cramps and Panther Burns, eventually winding up washing dishes. Big Star Records returned Chilton to the studio, but by then, the years of drinking, drugs and dissolution had dulled his talents. Chilton toured for a few years, eventually abandoning the Big Star covers in his set to concentrate on hokey lounge lizard jazz like "Volare." It's a classic American story, and I'm awfully glad this CD is around to collect all these tracks so another generation doesn't have to go through the same collector hell that I did getting all this stuff on vinyl.

- Jim T.

THE DAMNED

Machine Gun Etiquette, CD
Roadrunner

The Damned, one of the all-time greats, has re-released their 1979 album, and it's probably one of the best examples of how

good the Damned really were. It includes almost all of their "greatest hits" including "Love Song," "Smash It Up," and "Rabid (Over You)." This is a great album and the CD contains bonus tracks. Buy it and fall in love with these ghoul rockers all over again.

- Jamie T.

DIDJITS

Full Nelson Reilly, lp
Touch & Go

A whole album's worth of Didjits is like a three-day pass to Disneyworld, only they only let you ride Space Mountain and they grease the tracks so the damn little car you ride in slides down twice as fast as usual. Kind of like Urge Overkill on nitrous oxide playing in their underwear. The metaphors are killing me here, let's just say these three clowns play real fast rock 'n roll and you'll want to play this at least three more times after you hear it once.

- Jim T.

DINOSAUR JR.

Green Mind, lp
Sire

DJr's singer and songwriter, J Mascis, sounds as misplaced and lost on this, his fourth lp, as ever. Distorted electric gtr sludge trades off with acoustic backup. Post-punk collegians belting out lyrics like "there never really is a good time" can't help but warm the heart of a disgruntled collegiate plastic collector such as myself. When Mascis stops the distortion on his guitars, will that mean he's found what he's looking for? Or won't there be anything left to say?

- Tom B.

DOWN BY LAW

Down By Law, lp
Epitaph

Dave Smalley and the Chemical People. Now there's a match made in Hell -- the Joan of Arc of Emo-Core and the Dice Clay of Hardcore. Still, Smalley's proven (in his brief stint in All) that he can be a pop showman, and if you strip away the misogyny and sexism, the Chemical People are a pretty good popcore band, so it's no surprise that this lp rocks with lots of catchy hooks and a good solid hardcore beat. Smalley's vocals show their usual dynamic range, although his Up With People lyrics do retread a LOT of familiar territory (Be Yourself, Seize The Day, You Can Make A Difference If You Try, etc.). In fact, my favorite tune here finds Smalley reaching back to his Boston days for a cover of the Outlets' "Best Friends." I bet they're terrific when they tour this summer. I'll be there, anyway.

- Jim T.

FLAT DUO JETS

Go Go Harlem Baby, CD
Sky

Degenerate Southern psychobilly by two North Carolina cretins, dripping with sweat, energy, and a feel for authentic roots rock as real and juicy as a chaw of plug tobacco. What's cool about the Duo Jets is that their appreciation of rockabilly goes a lot deeper than a couple of old Cramps records -- they are echoes here of Roy Orbison, Hank Williams, Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran... And you can just tell these good ole boys love those records truly, they're not just puttin' on a rockabilly pose to get girls or a record deal. Way cool and lots of fun.

- Jim T.

GREEN

White Soul & Bittersweet, CD
Widely Distributed, 6517 N. Ashland, Chicago IL 60626

I've come to think of Green's Jeff Lescher as the Amerindie

alternative to Ray Davies. Year after year, Lescher bounces from label to label, finding and replacing the members of his band, recording these brilliant but unappreciated love songs in a voice band's newest lp with the "Bittersweet" EP, hitherto available only in Europe. Green can remind you of anybody from the Beatles to Cheap Trick to Smokey Robinson, but never enough for you to forget the grungy white boy with the touch of Motown in his soul who's pouring his heart into every one of these songs. This CD includes both a new lp and the hitherto import-lp "Bittersweet" EP, which includes Lescher's most brilliant pop song since "Gotta Get A Record Out," actually a followup to that tune called "The Record Company Song" that anyone who's ever pursued a recording contract (or followed the career of bands that have) will love.

- Jim T.

HARM FARM

Nice Job, Einstein, lp

Alias

If bluegrass-punk sounds like your cup of sassafrass tea, go for it. I couldn't quite decide if Harm Farm are brilliant, innovative, and totally unique, or whether they're just closet Deadheads who jam too much and have a fiddle player like Hot Tuna. A lyric sheet would have helped; some of the songs sound as if they're telling interesting stories but go by too quickly to be sure. And the bottom line is I really haven't felt like listening to this again.

- Jim T.

HOLLOW MEN

Cresta, CD

Arista

Chimey Brit pop in the vein of Stone Roses and The Charlatans, except it's not as dancey. Breathy vocals and tinkly guitars dominate. "Pink Panther" is a yummy pop tune, sweet as bubblegum and sunny as a summer's day. Looks like the bowl haircut is coming back.

- Jodi S.



JAWBOX

Photo by Jim Testa

INSTIGATORS

Recover Session, lp

Cartel/Full Circle, 12 Bell St Newsome, Huddersfield, HD4 6NN U.K.

Recorded live on the BBC in 1988, this veteran British hardcore band has a stinging American sound with blues-based rock riffs and strong vocals. Seven songs give you a good taste of what they're about.

- Jim T.

JAWBOX

Grippe, lp

Dischord

This came in the mail at the last possible moment before we finished this issue, which is a shame. Jawbox isn't a band you can appreciate with one quick listen. Recorded last year before the addition of their fourth member, Jay Robbins and troupe here lay down 11 amazing tracks that once again extend the boundaries of what we consider D.C. hardcore. Every lyric is a free verse poem, none of them make literal sense but all are open to interpretation. I sense a struggle in the words to find an identity (remember, Robbins was an overlooked backup player in Government Issue for years before forming Jawbox); at least, that's one possible meaning of lines like "You wook from a dream of a blank page/unwritten story of six years sleeping." Odd that Kim Coletta's bass, such a major presence in their live performance, has been mixed so low here. Even odder to hear a Dischord band cover Joy Division! A rich, varied, polyrhythmic tour de force that people will be listening to and trying to come to grips with long after this fanzine has been recycled into bird cage filler.

- Jim T.

LEAVING TRAINS

Sleeping Underwater Survivors, lp

SST

This is a blues-influenced, mid-tempo rock 'n roll lp with some

interesting hooks and changes, and a good dose of humor that doesn't leave a sour taste in your mouth. The band certainly lives the life, with some great stories about Falling James (singer) getting into an almost-brawl with Sylvester Stallone and other good things like that. Overall, an all right record, but I'm waiting for the paperback version of their tour and encounters.

- Tom A.

LEMONHEADS

"Favorite Spanish Dishes," 5-song CD

Atlantic

My favorite Lemonheads release since "Hate Your Friends;" the first one since their debut that hasn't bored me midway through it anyway. Of course, this is only five songs long, and three of the tunes are covers (and really cool ones too - Linda Ronstadt's Stone Pony hit "Different Drum," the New Kids' "Step By Step," done perfectly straight, and an acoustic version of the Misfits' "Skulls"). The two originals drive home my point that sole surviving original Lemonhead Evan Dando is not Paul Westerberg; this ep, for me at least, drives home the point that the guy is an all right entertainer but not enough of a songwriter to sustain the band on his own. Well, let's see what happens. Meanwhile, if you dig the Lemonheads or if you haven't checked them out in a while because they've sold out and gone major label, this is really worth a listen.

- Jim T.

LEFT INSANE

Tool Box, lp

Nemesis/Cargo

These guys have a definite Southern California (Descendents) sound, which by the way is where they're from. This is a pretty good release, but if you're not a fan of instrumentals, you might think twice, since that's basically all this consists of.

- Jamie T.

LOST

Headhunter/Cargo

Eight powerful songs from Erie, PA's Lost, featuring Brian Di Placido's powerful and emotional vocals against angry and aggressive guitar rock. The cover of Patti Smith's "Pissing In The River" is nothing short of inspired, but the originals show the same intensity and bitterness. Maybe if they get out of Erie they'll be able to write kinder and gentler songs than the brutal "What Do You Know, Bitch."

- Jim T.

LUNGFISH

Necklace of Heads, lp

Simple Machines/Dischord

Already defunct, Lungfish leave behind some thick, well-structured, loud rocking wax. It reminds me of Kingface because of the memorable music and feeling. Lots of emotion and powerful build-ups leave a smile on your face. The best tune, "Nothing Is Easy," was also on the Wedge compilation 7" on Simple Machines. Eight songs, all unique and throat grabbing. Warning: may be too rock for some, but don't think Sub-Pop.

- Tom A.

MINDFUNK

Mindfunk, lp

Epic

I looked for something hidden-meaningwise on this, but all I could come up with was dull heavy metal lyrics and shit I've heard before. I'm sure it'll find a marketable niche but not with me.

- Tom B.

MONSULA

Structure, lp

Lookout, Box 11374, Berkeley CA 94701

Although I thoroughly enjoyed this lp and recommend it for anyone into the "Berkeley" sound...well, that's the problem, see? That driving, rhythmic tempo, melodic vocals and crunchy guitars have become a "sound;" if you've heard Fuel or Cringer or any of the post-Fugazi Lookout bands, you know what to expect.

The lyrics are what sets Monsula apart. Like a lot of young bands, these guys write poetic lyrics, but at least Monsula is dealing with real life and not political vagaries or philosophical conceits: "Razors" sounds like a true-life incident turned into a hard-hitting song about the death (by violence) of a friend, and "Indestructible" is as good an indictment of nazi punks as I've heard. And since I'm writing this review on Earth Day, I should quote the line in "Pre-Past Tense" that I like a lot: "Poison in the well/pollution in the sky/it's not just the corporation/it's the consumer, you and I."

- Jim T.

MR. T EXPERIENCE

Making Things With Light, lp (Lookout Records)

"Sex Offender"/"Last Time I Listened To You" 45 (Vital Music)

The latest MTX album is their best since their first, no doubt about it. They've tightened up, gotten better as musicians and basically stayed true to their original sound. Tunes like "What Went Wrong" and "Parasite" cover familiar MTX territory without rehashing and for this I commend them. But I gotta say I was a little disappointed; maybe because three of the songs were previously released (two as an A&B side of a Lookout single) or maybe it's because a few of the songs clunk along like early 70's rock anthems. I dunno.

The lyrics are wonderful as usual: Frank sneaks little abstract pieces of tv show lines ("those meddling kids" from Scooby Doo appears in one song) and it comes off as intelligent and, dare I say, heartfelt poetry. I dunno. The good tunes are excellent and worth the price of the record but you might wanna omit some of the dogs when you tape it.

The single is punk perfection. The Blondie cover started me tapping my toes and the B side qualifies in a 3-way tie with "Parasite" and "A Song About A Girl Who Went Shopping" as the best MTX tune ever. Three-chord punk is alive & kicking and thank your god that bands like MTX can improve musically without backpedalling in the quality department. So in a nutshell, the Mr T Experience remains one of a handful of great punk bands in the country and as long as they keep writing songs like "She's No Rocket Scientist" and "Last Time I Listened To You," I'll tolerate the occasional stinker. Amen.

- Ben W.

NAPALM DEATH

Harmony Corruption, lp

Earache/Combat

I've always loved Napalm Death, especially during their early grindcore days when they played at the speed of light and the lyrics were totally inaudible. Their first full length lp, Scum, was revolutionary. Now the band has gone thru some lineup changes (the drummer, Mick Harris, is the only original member left). The result: Death Metal. Fortunately the lyrics don't revolve around the usual dopey topics -- violence, satan, and death. Instead, we have nasty political themes that are written with style and intelligence. N.D. have slowed down quite a bit too, although there are still a lot of grinding parts to their tunes. (Did I say "tunes?") I guess you could say the band has "progressed" to a more accessible sound, which may not be too bad as long as they don't get cocky and start playing \$20 shows with the likes of Sepultura and Slayer.

- John L.

NO FX
Ribbed, lp
Epitaph

For some reason, hardcore and humor just never mixed well with me, and by no means do I lack a sense of humor. It's just no band I've ever seen or heard could pull off the two simultaneously -- except No FX. This lp is a laugh-a-minute, down to the condom wrapper cover concept. Songs about breast enlargements, showering, and L.A. ("El Lay"), mixed with more serious numbers about foreign policy and violence, provide a well rounded spectrum of biting sarcasm. Snotty, harmonious vocals and a melodic hardcore musical style, with bits of 50's doo wop and ska thrown in, make this an entertaining and memorable record.

- Mike H.

NOVA MOB
The Last Days Of Pompeii, CD
Rough Trade

I really liked Grant Hart's work in Husker Du, and I know I'm not supposed to compare old projects to new ones, but I can't help it. The fact that I liked Husker Du so much just made this album a bigger disappointment. Hart's voice sounds atrocious and at times it's borderline cockrock. And the band backing him up seems stuck in the college music scene rut. My advice: Break out your copy of New Day Rising and save your money.

- Jamie T.

OLIVE LAWN
Sap, lp
Nemesis/Cargo

It's a good thing Nemesis Records decided to diversity. Some of their releases were really starting to test peoples' patience. Fortunately, Olive Lawn's first full-length lp is a hot slab of wax, mid to quick paces power-punk with angst-filled vocals and full, raw, in your face production that really kicks. After repeated listenings, this one seems to be an album with a lot of different writing styles, which is always a treat. It's also tough to pick the best cut, since there's not a weak one here ("Who's Playing God Today" is my fave, tho). Olive Lawn -- definitely worth checking out, and in case you're interested, they also have two 7" EP's out that totally kick ass. Good job.

- John L.

PITCHFORK
Eucalyptus, lp
Nemesis/Cargo

Interesting, experimental music from this now-defunct quartet. The music is energetic and it grows on you, sort of FIREHOSE, Squirrel Bait, and a million other bands combined, taken one step further...kind of like Fugazi, but with a different edge. Buy this record because if they weren't popular when they were around, they should be now.

- Jamie T.

THE RICHIES
Winter Wonderland, German import lp
Music Geil, 17 N. Elizabeth, Chicago IL 60607

Three German mooks who wanna be the Ramones so bad, it's charming. Local bands like the Blisters or Fiendz often get accused of this sort of thing, but these guys...geez! Every tune here is a three-chord ode to the Blitzkrieg Boppers from Queens, with English lyrics. Thanks can't be so different in West Germany, at least the rock clubs sound exactly the same, as in "Saturday Night Bar:" "I can't survy the crowd/there are no chairs/I can watch the bouncers/kicking out some rowdies/the music's so loud/the lavatory's so far/at the Saturday night bar." God, sounds like they've been to Maxwell's a few times, doesn't it? Gabba gabba, this is hilarious. And it rocks too.

- Jim T.

QUIT
Earlier Thoughts, lp
Esync Ocular Interchange, PO Box 380621, Miami FL 33288

Slammin' full-throttle popcore here from a Miami trio I've never heard of before. Finding gold like this among the dozens of vinyl frisbees that come in the mail every month is probably what keeps this periodical alive, halleluia. If these guys lived in Berkeley and put this out on Lookout, they'd be huge. Well, at least as huge as Green Day. Never mind, try and find a copy, this rocks.

- Jim T.

REPLACEMENTS
"Don't Buy Or Sell, It's Crap," 5-song CD
Sire

This is one of those things that record companies put out to sucker fans - of the five songs here, there are three non-lp cuts and a drunken stumblebum cover of "Like A Rolling Stone" (c'mon, Paul, I thought you'd outgrown that shit, at least that's what you told the guy from Rolling Stone magazine...) - and it's another chance to get one of the songs from the All Shook Down lp ("When It Began") some extra airplay and press. Well, okay. "When It Began" is actually a pretty good Westerberg tune, and since I don't own a copy of All Shook Down, I guess it'll be enough to keep this in my collection. "Satellite" is notable since Tommy and not Paul wrote it. But unless you're a rabid 'placemats fan, you really don't need this.

- Jim T.

RIFLE SPORT

Primo, lp
Big Money, Box 2483, Minneapolis MN 55402

Primo is atmospheric, moody music that doesn't come off as pretentious. The band has great driving bass lines that make way for the rest of the band; not unlike Joy Division. Yet this is more rigid and up front than Joy Division. Also a surprise is that the band doesn't take itself too seriously, as seen in the lyrics to "Jon." This also reminds me at times of Mary My Hope. Should be popular.

- Tom A.

SAIGON KICK
Saigon Kick, lp
Atlantic

When it comes to L.A. glam rockers, you can pretty much pick your own Poison (heh heh), so here comes another one. Saigon Kick put a slight alternative edge on their party music, with double-tracked harmonic vocals that sound much too much like Jane's Addiction to be accidental, plus the usual complement of power ballads and hard rockers. The best that I can say is that I found this palatable and there's no reason it shouldn't find an audience among the braindead segment of the teenage audience who can actually tell the difference between the latest babes in spandex videos from Poison, Motley Crue, and Ratt.

- Jim T.

SCHOOL OF FISH
School Of Fish, CD
Capitol

It sure looks like Capitol is trying to recreate the flukey success of the Smithereens, first with the Cavedogs and now with these L.A. babyfaces. "Three Strange Days" seems like the tune here with the buzz, a neo-psychadelic charmer with that Beatles/raga twist and a hooky chorus. I like the Fish best when they go garagey, like on "King Of The Dollar," but given how depressing most of these lyrics get, they obviously prefer the Pat DiNizio school of weepy angst. Even the song called "Euphoria" sounds sad. Remember when twenty year olds with major label deals made rock 'n roll so they could get laid? Now they just try to be taken seriously.

- Jim T.

SOSUMI

Bad Day At The Lab, CD

Synthetic, PO Box 609478, Cleveland OH 44109

There's a rule of thumb that says the weakest band on an indie label is usually the band that the owner of the label is in. Unfortunately, that sort of rings true here. Synthetic chief Malcolm Ryder leads Sosumi through 13 tongue-in-cheek tunes that never take themselves seriously, but never actually get funny either. The tone is like early Mothers Of Invention, a mix of jazz, punk, glam, and pop, with jokey song titles like "Just Say Yes" and "This Is Supposed To Be Fun." Unfortunately, none of these jokes have punchlines, and the limp stabs at humor undercut the obvious musical talent at work here. A prime example is the finale, a cover of "I Am The Walrus" that wallows in dumb production tricks at the expense of what could have been a killer version of a cool old song. I dunno.

- Jim T.

SPERMBIRDS

Common Thread, lp

Zap/Full Circle

Another British import, this time of a German band with an expatriate American singer whose lyrics are in English. The Spermbirds' earlier work usually contained at least one or two strongly worded anti-American lyrics but the songs here are all personal and introspective. In fact much of it sounds like Fugazi, especially "Open Letter," in which the Spermbirds confront the expectations of their fans: "Don't tell me what to sing about/you don't try to understand/you might think you've found another easy target/but I've got other plans/You talk, but not to me/talk shit, that's all I see." Musically, too, the band hits on strong polyrhythms instead of a straightahead 4/4 mosh tempo, with some brilliant guitar work by Roger and Frank.

- Jim T.

STARVATION ARMY

Mercenary Position, lp

Rave, Box 40075, Philadelphia PA 19106

The thing with these ageless Cleveland bar bands, I think, is that someone takes these guys down to Lake Erie at puberty and dips them in that toxic sludge and they come out covered with a thick calloused hide that lets them survive anything. Knifedance had that feisty toughness and so do Starvation Army. On their second lp for Rave Records, the Army's added some vogueish elements of funk and soul to their potent, hard-edged punk. It's all still about as trendy as a snowplow and just as powerful, sort of a testament to good old-fashioned virtues like hard work and sweat and all that Ohio stuff that used to teach in school.

- Jim T.

STEEL POLE BATHTUB

Tulip, lp

Boner

Imagine a mutant intergalactic fungus infests the left side of Jawbreaker's brain, festering and growing into a hideous 7-foot pustular monstrosity that turns grown men into quivering mounds of pudding. That's sort of the Steel Pole Bathtub Experience, here on their third long-player expanding the sound to include some bluesy harp on one tune and some jazzy lounge lizard vamping behind a Myrna Loy sample (from one of the Thin Man detective flicks) on another. Everything else here would grow hair on a plum. Play loud.

- Jim T.

SUCKSPEED

Slow Motion, import lp

Rotz, 17 N. Elizabeth, Chicago IL 60607

A German trio with a really talented guitarist who combines lots of different influences. This goes from slow elongated acoustic intros into thrashmetal with forays into driving bluesy



Photo by Jim Testa

STEEL POLE BATHTUB

hard rock. You get the feeling these guys grew up listening to Led Zep, Clapton, and American hardcore and mosh it all together when they write their own stuff. Lyrics are in English and when's the last time you heard a band whose songs were inspired by both Herman Hesse and Picasso?

- Jim T.

TAD

8-Way Santa, lp

Sub-Pop

If you scored a copy with the white trash wedding on the jacket, you own a collector's item. Seems the lady in the photo found a copy of this at the local K Mart and freaked, precipitating a hasty recall of said record cover. A pity the music inside's not as interesting, just the usual Sub Pop stew of grizzled vocals, grungy guitars and throbbin' bluesy backbeats. Actually, Tad's about as good at this genre as it gets, so if the Sub Pop thing is your cup of Mad Dog 20/20, go for it.

- Jim T.

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

Crammed Into Infinity, CD

Rockville

About time this record (well...CD) finally came out. If I'm not mistaken, this was sitting in a tape cannister back when JEM went bankrupt a couple of years ago. Anyway, Austin's coolest Dylanphiles are back in the saddle, churning out their moody acoustic and, yes, DYLANESQUE, folk/rock. The Dylan thing actually starts to verge on self-parody on a couple of tunes ("Standing Here Wondering Which Way To Go," "She's Not Free") but as long as you don't mind whiney nasal vocals, this'll rock you and massage your mind at the same time.

- Jim T.

THREE LEGGED DOG

Loaded, lp

Bomp

Three guys from Missouri who, among other things, sing about not wanting to hear about the problems of the world, religion, and so on, and back it up with some garbled & distorted guitar work. Some decent cuts on this lp w/ one or two similar to the Rollins Band's stuff. Although this is a new release, some of these tracks date back to '87 - '89.

- Tom B.

TOUT PARIS

Tout Paris, import lp

Rotz

A pretty weird German band, here, with members whose ages range from 20 to 46. Musically this sounds like mostly NY punk rock circa '75-76, but the vocals have an arty, educated tone... Okay, imagine Morrissey fronting the False Prophets. Like that.

- Jim T.

TRIBE AFTER TRIBE

Tribe After Tribe, lp

MegaForce

Usually when a band coins its own phrase, it's time to get out the pooper-scooper, but South Africa's Tribe After Tribe calls its music "Afro-Psychedelic Rock" and on a few tunes at least, manages to live up to the term. Tribal polyrhythms and dense swirling lysergic guitar make a heady brew, but far too often, these guys go for the most commercial sound they can get, cheesy lite-metal power ballads, and I can get enough of that from our homegrown mooks on MTV.

- Jim T.

ULULATORS

Butt Nekkid & Howling At The Moon, lp

U:WHO, Box 1836, Vineyard Haven MA 02568

Amen! It's about time I heard a record that really struck my fancy. Great Latin, reggae, and ska music done in one really unique way. In parts, this reminds me of early Police or Specials, but not all that much. Anyway, these experienced musicians (esp the percussionists) deserve credit for having such a strong independent sound in these days of rehashed crap. Buy this and take their word for it: you are guaranteed not to sit still while listening to this album.

- Jamie T.

UNCLE GREEN

What An Experiment His Head Was, CD

DB

If I didn't know better, I'd swear this was a Nick Lowe album produced by Jim Dickinson. Hearty pop with a sly grin.

- Jim T.

URGE OVERKILL

The Supersonic Storybook, lp

Touch & Go, PO Box 25520, Chicago IL 60625

"(Today Is) Blackie's Birthday" has one of the riffs that made Urge Overkill one of the coolest bands in the U.S.A. (that and those velvet suits and their rockstar attitude). But great riffs are hard to come by, and for me, The Supersonic Storybook doesn't live up to Urge's best work; too heavy, too stolid, too Hendrix-y funk-metal. The song titles promise a goofy good time but only a few ("The Kids Are Insane," "Blackie's Birthday") deliver. If I wanna hear Midwestern metalloid masturbation, I'll listen to Halo Of Flies.

- Jim T.

VENUS BEADS

Incision, CD

Emergo

About half of this gets too droney or too wrapped up in production effects for my taste, but when these Brit boys actually get their act together and write songs - as on "Moon Is Red" and "On Second Thoughts" - they're as spot on as Teenage Fan Club. Interestingly, the songs are co-written by the vocalists, who are the guitarist and the drummer. That insures a good beat every other song, it seems; some of this lags like Ride or Lush, overproduced with that Mary Chain wall-of-fuzz, but the quicker tunes get the thumbs up from me.

- Jim T.

VICTIMS FAMILY

White Bread Blues, lp

Mordam, PO Box 988, San Francisco CA 94101

Victims Family pour on deftly warped, jazzy, funky punky music that reminds me of Th'Inbred or a better version of the Tar Babies. This band is tighter than a... well, let's just say they're tight, and the bass player is all over the fretboard like it was nothing. A funny cover with matching lyrics mock the pathetic lifestyles people have taken up. It's only fitting that this was produced by Nomeansno's John Wright.

(Jersey Beat regrets the really stupid review of this record that appeared last issue, written by an aging rock critic with Alzheimer's Disease or something.)

- Tom A.

WINDBREAKERS

Electric Landlady, CD

DB

The first time I ever met Bobby Sutliffe and Tim Lee -- aka The Windbreakers -- was back around 1985, shortly after the release of their EP "Any Monkey With A Typewriter." Now thru a happy coincidence, the CD of their new Electric Landlady album includes the "Monkey" EP as bonus tracks. What's amazing is that the years - and there have been a lot of them, full of more changes and estrangements and reconciliations than the plots in Dallas -- haven't changed these guys much at all. You've still got Tim's whiney drawl and garagey chords, Bobby's silky vocals and gliding hooks, each guy counterbalancing the other beautifully, making for one of the most gifted and enduring teams in alternative music. All of this is swell, although "Girl From Washington," "Waltzing Matilda," and "You Never Give Up" actually get into the gives-me-shivers category of greatness. If there was an Indie Rock Hall of Fame, Tim and Bobby would already be posing for their busts...and they're just getting their second wind.

- Jim T.

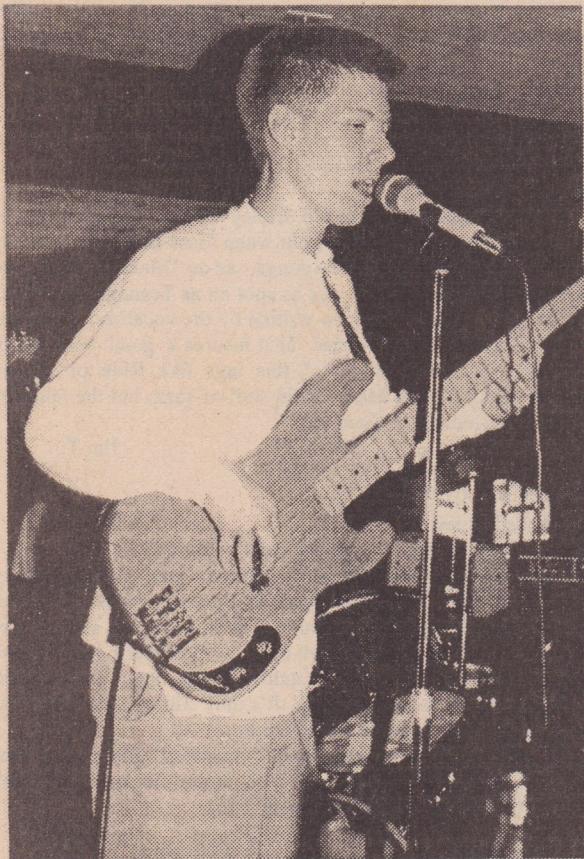
WORKING MOTHERS

Crush Me, CD

Earth Music/Cargo

This quartet hails from Birmingham, Alabama, geographically, but musically they're from somewhere between Athens and Cleveland. In other words, twangy melodic pop rock intermixed with scuzzy punk grunge. A couple of years ago, these tunes might have made a rockin' 8-song \$4.99 EP on Homestead something. I'm not really sure any of this is compelling enough to recommend it as a 14-song CD on Cargo, pleasant though it may be.

- Jim T.



The STEADY'S

Photo by Jim Testa

H.P. ZINKER
Beyond It All, CD
Fire/Roughneck

HP Zinker never ceases to amaze me. Their previous EP, "...And There was Light," and the single "The Knowitall" were tense and aggressive while possessing an inner beauty. The EP lacked a live drummer but now Hans & Frank have found one who makes all the difference. Based in a real melodic sense, these guys can beat the shit out of any fluff metal band's power dirges. If you like guitar and can't take the fuzz 'n buzz anymore, turn to H.P. and dive in.

- Jodi S.

THE BIG ONE
Flipside, PO Box 363, Whittier CA 90608

San Francisco and Los Angeles -- two cities, two punk scenes, and one big fault line running between them threatening to turn Nevada into beachfront property any day now. So Joy Aoki of Flipside decided to capture the coolest bands of both scenes on vinyl before "The Big One" turned them all into compost, and here you go: Victim's Family, Monsula, Cringer, Mr T Experience, Green Day, Hunger Farm, Offspring, a whole bunch

more, and even Dave Smalley and the Chemical People's new supergroup, Down By Law. The best cuts are the punchy power-pop punk-rock, the least successful seem to be the cuts where the bands try something outside their usual specialty (to wit, the Melvins/Steel Pole Bathtub Task Force cut, a lame funk groove instrumental). The CD also includes cuts from the excellent and now out-of-print LA: City Of Power comp. Snap this one up before it's gone too!

- Jim T.

FROM TWISTED MINDS COME...

Noiseville

This compilation of grunge noise scumminess starts out hot enough, but it quickly degenerates into grunge noise boredom. The Action Swingers' track is my fave -- cutting guitar riffs that simultaneously jar and groove you. Unholy Swill do a thru-a-mega-distorto-telephone sticky version of Ice T's "Colors," aptly titled "White Trash Shouldn't Rap." Surgery destruct Dylan's "Knocking On Heaven's Door," which caused my pal Dan to remark, "Is this Flipper?"

- Terry T.

"EAST COST EXCHANGE VIDEO FANZINE #2"

% Ethan Minsker, 50 Lexington Ave #3C, NY, NY 10010

Like most video fanzines, this one is a compilation of different segments, ranging from some rad skateboard video to a piece about yo yo's to a clips of Hoboken's Steady's and D.C.'s Desiderata. In between, there are short films on yo yo's and sexual roles. Entertaining, excellent video quality and photography all the way through, and at \$7, a bargain.

- Jim T.

"GLAM BOYS ON WHEELS (TOO COOL TO SKATE)"

Foundation Skate Video, PO Box 547, Del Mar CA 92014

Who is the Foundation skateboard company? Who knows? And this video stands out in the arsenal of skate films by actually carrying a storyline. It appears that a bunch of the skaters for Foundation skateboards just decided to get mom's video camera and drive a decrepit old van through the country and hit all the skate spots. I must say, comparing this video to others I've seen (such as the New Deal video and the H-Street video), the skating isn't as impressive. Nevertheless, this stands out from the others because it captures everything else that's going on. Instead of cutting the parts where people fall, they keep them in. Instead of filming security guards, they film themselves eating at a fast food joint. And instead of the tough brawl of heavy skating and people with seemingly inflated egos, these kids are quite the opposite - beating each other up in public, destroying a motel room, freaking out in a compact car. What else could you ask for? The video captures what it seems to have been a really cool time for them. The skaters in this video seem to enjoy every moment, even when they drive their van into a ditch. The occasionally shoddy photography is a little annoying, but it does justice to the whole theme. And they overuse that fisheye lens. But what the hell. Send \$19.95 for this and give it a shot.

- Alex Swain

VIDEO SHEETMETAL VOL. 1

Red Decibels/Warner Bros.

Jake Wisely of Sheetmetal Fanzine (and more recently, Red Decibels Records out of Minneapolis) has put together an excellent 60 minute compilation video, with a dozen bands ranging from alternative (Soul Asylum, Sonic Youth) to headbangers (Coffin Break, Anacrusis, Coup De Grace) to major label arena-rock wannabes (Black Crowes, Soundgarden, Jane's Addiction). It's all tongue in cheek and keeps moving right along (about the deadeast part is Kim and Thurston of Sonic Youth explaining why they haven't sold out by signing to Geffen). I wish the actual performance clips were longer but this is still the best stab at a true "video fanzine" I've seen in a long time.

- Jim T.



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WRITTEN BY JIM - APPROVED BY TOM - DRAWN BY ANDY SEA MONKEY - READ BY MILLIONS



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MAY 1991	YOUTH GONE MAD
JUN 1991	CASEY SCOTT & JOHN S. HALL
JUL 1991	RON PROSTATE



RESISTORS



TINY SCARS

ROTZ / GEIL RELEASES

RESISTORS 'Tiny Scars': This 10 song debut is kick in the face punk rock with a bit of metal influence. "Your Fascist Mind" is a full HC classic. The up-beat tempo and roughness pull together a tight performance. If the Resistors weren't from Germany you'd swear they might be the angry nephews of Henry Rollins. Great vocals and riffiness that resembles the Misfits and Danzig but a definite new style and character. LP comes with 18.5"x24" heavy stock, glossy poster of cover art.

SWINGIN' TEENS 'Transfixation': Great, non kitsch hard rock with roots in the Stooges as well as early/mid 70's Golden Earring. The Swingin' Teens aren't holding anything back, and their music won't take "no" for an answer. This album is just about as loud, arrogant, determined, and visceral as it gets on the alternative hard rock/metal scene. If you can handle 100% attitude - this is for you!

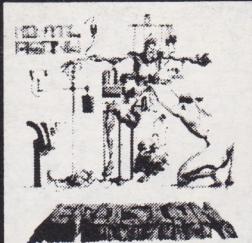


EUROPEAN RELEASES IMPORTED & DISTRIBUTED BY ROTZ RECORDS:



ATTITUDE 'Kein Schlaf Bis Deutschland': A 5 song mini LP released in 87 from the new breed of California HC. Departing from the punk rock norm of the early 80's, this record blends the heritage and tradition of both HC and heavy metal into a style that would influence bands to come.

WE BITE RECORDS (GERMANY)



EROSION 'Mortal Agony': The 1st LP breaking the sound barrier with what critics have labeled 'techno-thrash'. Vocals from the pit and scorching guitars barely held in check by intricate song structures and precision musicianship.

WE BITE RECORDS (GERMANY)



HYPE 'Life's Hard ... Then You Die': This 84 Canadian release takes things back to the early days of HC. A prime example of the beginning shift from punk to HC. Hype's straight edge attitude is evident on their intelligent, critical lyrics that leave no rock unturned.

WE BITE RECORDS (GERMANY)



HC COMPILATION
'There's A Method To Our Madness': A 19 song US punk rock compilation, featuring tracks (many unreleased) from the likes of Ludichrist, P.I.L. Klub, Sloppy Seconds, Life Sentence, Amazing Grace, Ultra Violence & more ...

WE BITE RECORDS (GERMANY)



FUN GOGH 'Cut Of Your Ear': A non-stop 10 song rampage of punk/metal fusion. Picture open highways under desert sky, Harley-Davidsons and the smell of black leather. A powerful synthesis of metal and punk. LUX-NOISE PRODUCTIONS (SWITZERLAND)



PLAYBOYS 'Emotions': One of the few three-member-bands capable of packing 35 years of rock styles into one tight sound, with influences ranging from early Rock A Billy to Iggy Pop and the Cure. LUX-NOISE PRODUCTIONS (SWITZERLAND)

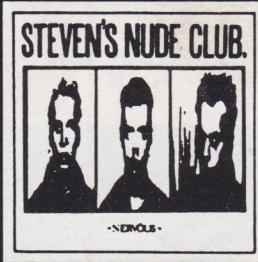


THE NOTWIST 'Notwist': If there is such a thing as folk-core, this is it. Don't let the word 'folk' throw you off though. R.E.M. this ain't. The twisting, power-tool guitars are reminiscent of old Dinosaur Jr., but with a heavier groove and unbelievable time changes.

SUBWAY RECORDS (GERMANY)



JAMES LAST EXPERIENCE
'Take A Virgin': A great 6 song mini LP representing the good old 70's punk style with a production quality of the 90's. Get this album before censorship gets it!! LUX-NOISE PRODUCTIONS (SWITZERLAND)



STEVEN'S NUDE CLUB 'Nervous': Strictly for fun power pop from Switzerland. Irreverent, playful melodies and weird low vocals make this release hard not to like. It's kind of Elvis on "Ludes" singing on a cheap detective sound track. A strange and danceable clubmix. LUX-NOISE PRODUCTIONS (SWITZERLAND)



TOUT PARIS 'Tout Paris': Psychedelic punk rock with pop sensibility which captures the atmosphere of the 60's influenced punk with their jangling guitars and dead pan vocals. Reminds one of Velvet Underground, and yet... somehow better. HUCKLEBERRY HOME RECORDS (GERMANY)



DEATH IN ACTION 'Just For Our Sakes': Death In Action's guitar assault hammers away at the senses while at the same time delivers an intelligent statement of human nature. Complex and structured speed metal with a conscience of human nature.

WE BITE RECORDS (GERMANY)



SPERM BIRDS 'Nothing Is Easy': This was supposed to be their last album. The cream of Europe's punk/thrash crop take their final bow on this mix of unreleased tracks, new versions of old songs and live recordings of their farewell concert.

WE BITE RECORDS (GERMANY)

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